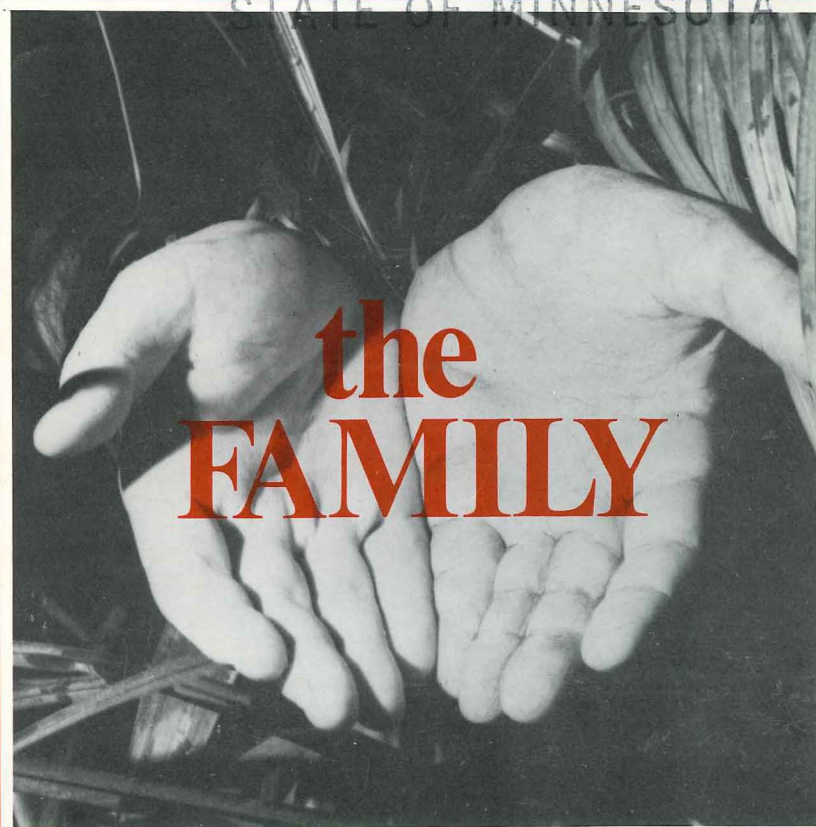




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# Minnesota Governor's Conference Report on

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The Minnesota Governor's Conference on Families was held in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota, at the Sheraton Inn-Northwest, on May 22 and May 23, 1978. Sponsored by the Office of the Governor, it was designed and coordinated by the Minnesota State Planning Agency and the Council on the Economic Status of Women.

**Purpose of the Conference:** to offer, for policy-makers and service providers whose responsibilities and decisions affect families, an opportunity to take a detailed and critical look at some of the pressures on Minnesota's families today.

More than three hundred persons — legislators, state department personnel, elected officials from all levels of government throughout Minnesota, educators, program administrators, social workers and others — attended nineteen simultaneous workshops, covering a variety of family related topics.

**Result:** numerous and wide-ranging suggestions for needed changes in both policies and programs.

What follows is a summary of those proceedings.

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Rita Hoffman, Research and Writing  
Shila O'Fahey, Editing  
VanDyke & Muenich, Inc., Graphic Design



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## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

### Monday, May 22

- 8:30 Welcome and Introductions
- 8:45 *FAMILIES: A FOCUS FOR POLICY*
- 9:25 *IMAGES OF THE FAMILY: THEN AND NOW*
- 10:30 Family Studies: A Need for Data
- 10:45 *MINNESOTA'S FAMILIES: A DEMOGRAPHIC VIEW*
- 11:45 Lunch
- 12:45 Luncheon Speech  
*MINNESOTA'S FAMILIES: A PRECIOUS RESOURCE*

Governor Rudy Perpich

- 1:45 Simultaneous Workshops:
  - A. Family Participation in Education
  - B. Early Childhood and Family Life Education
  - C. Family Health Care Alternatives
- 3:00 Simultaneous Workshops:
  - D. Use of School Facilities for Family and Community Programming
  - E. School Support Services for Students and Families
  - F. Health Maintenance in the Family
- 4:15 Simultaneous Workshops:
  - G. Family Law and the Courts
  - H. The Sensitivity of Public Policy to Ethnic Families
- 5:00 Adjourn

### Tuesday, May 23

- 8:30 The Employment and Economic Status of Minnesota's Families
  - 9:15 *THE FAMILY UNDER PRESSURE*
  - 11:00 Simultaneous Workshops:
    - I. Flexible Work Schedules
    - J. Housing Policies
    - K. Economics of Child Care
    - L. Tax Policy and Families
    - M. Single Parent Families
  - 12:00 Lunch
  - 1:00 Luncheon Presentation: *FAMILY IMPACT ANALYSIS: EXPERIENCES AND PROCEDURES*
  - 1:45 Simultaneous Workshops:
    - N. Helping Families Care for Their Elderly Members
    - O. Family Participation in Chemical Dependency Treatment
    - P. Families with Adolescents
    - Q. Services for families of Corrections Clients
    - R. Helping Families Care for Their Disabled Members
    - S. Substitute Families: Adoption and Foster Care
  - 3:00 Violence in Families  
(Film presentation and panel discussion)
  - 4:00 Concluding Remarks
  - 4:30 Adjourn
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# Minnesota Families: A Precious Resource

by the Honorable Rudy Perpich,  
Governor of the State of Minnesota

I have been looking forward to this conference for over a year now. It's exciting to realize that we'll spend two full days considering Minnesota families — a subject so very vital to the well-being of our state and our outlook for the future.

I feel a great sense of gratitude for being part of a closely knit family through the years. Without the determination, hard work and concern of my parents, I could not have hoped for a college education or a professional career. My parents gave my brothers and me the strong family support we needed to make our way out of poverty. My wife, Lola, comes from the same sort of supportive family background. And this is the kind of environment we have tried to provide for our children.

Families are truly our most precious social resource, because they are responsible for perpetuating the basic goals and values which hold society together. No adequate substitute can be found for the long-term nurturing and training of children. And for many of us, our families are the first places we turn for support and sustenance in times of stress or pain.

One thing that concerns me — and one thing that led to the convening of this conference — is that the family has to function under a lot of pressure these days. However, the majority of families still are providing supportive environments for children, often despite economic hardship and other pressures.

Family members still care about each other. And even though extended families are less likely to share the same roof these days, they frequently remain in the same area and share family social events and other common projects.

Another thing that concerns me as an elected official is that government policies contribute to some of the pressures on families, when the opposite ought to be true. Government policies should be strengthening families. That is why I'm asking the participants in this conference to focus on ways to adapt public policy to serve better the needs of families.

Government policies already have tremendous impact on families. Yet in the past, few have considered families when those policies have been put together. We have lobbyists representing special interests. But who speaks specifically for families?

Most European countries have explicit family policies. France, for instance, has a ministry for family affairs. Austria has a national advisory committee on family affairs, which makes recommendations to the Chancellor. Sweden, Norway, and Hungary all have official family policies. Unlike these other Western nations, we have no formal family policy. The result is that government's impact on families has been haphazard and unplanned.

I am confident we can change that approach in Minnesota. As a beginning, I have appointed a Task Force on Families to study the results of this conference and develop recommendations for the Legislature, state agencies, and the upcoming White House Conference on Families.

Today and tomorrow we will hear many facts and figures about our changing families. We will hear about family problems. We will hear about family triumphs. We will hear about some government policies that weaken families and some that help families. As you participate in the discussions today and tomorrow, there are a number of items I hope you'll place on your agenda for priority attention.



The first is employment and income. There probably is no other area as vital to a family's well being. Recent studies confirm what many people have suspected all along — that unemployment has high social costs. Drug abuse, alcoholism, suicide, child abuse, death, heart disease, mental hospital admissions — all go up as unemployment increases. We are fortunate in Minnesota to have unemployment rates that are continually one to two percentage points below the national average.

But some groups within the state are not as well off as the averages imply. Unemployment is higher for women, young people and minorities who are in the labor force. Even when these people have jobs, their wages and fringe benefits are likely to be low. In state government we are doing what we can to expand the job market and increase opportunities for women, young

people and minorities. Through programs of individuals and business tax relief, we are making the state an attractive place to live and do business.

Our vocational-technical schools and colleges and universities produce a highly trained work force. The Department of Economic Development works closely with the business community to encourage expansion and innovation. We are implementing a tougher affirmative action program in state employment. But there is a limit to what state government can accomplish. We must have continued federal programs to combat hardcore unemployment. We also need a firmer commitment from private businesses to follow the examples of firms like Control Data that have made the hiring of women and minorities a priority.

Another item for the priority agenda is human services. Twenty-three percent of the total state budget is going to Health, Economic Security, Welfare and Corrections this biennium. Minnesota counties devote about half their budgets to human services. Despite this large investment, we're not making as much headway as we'd like against problems like alcoholism, drug abuse and juvenile delinquency.

Meanwhile, the cost of providing these services is increasing. I hope this conference will consider questions like the following:

How do we cope with the increased demand for human services when our public funds are limited?

Do we need improved ways of setting priorities?

Are we getting the most out of our dollars?

How can we increase coordination and cooperation within and among human services agencies?

One of the clearest needs seems to be for emphasizing the family approach in all human services. Some state and local agencies are making a start in this direction. Human services planners are realizing that problems like child abuse are really family problems, and that working with the family is the only effective treatment in the long run.

We also need services which help the elderly and handicapped remain independent and in their own homes or in the homes of their families. We need to stop sending so many senior citizens to nursing homes.

We need to design more community programs for the mentally and physically disabled so they won't need to be placed in state institutions far from their homes. Fortunately, Minnesota is making a lot of progress in deinstitutionalization. But we have more to accomplish.

I also hope you'll give a lot of thought to the need to help working parents meet their family responsibilities. Too often inflexible work schedules make it hard for mothers and fathers to be at home at times when their children need them most. I would hope that more public and private employers will respond by offering flexible work hours and part-time jobs without the loss of benefits. We are beginning a flex-time program in the state's Department of Personnel, and I hope it can be extended throughout state government.

Another important need of working parents is child care. Unfortunately, while state and federal funds give some support to licensed child care givers, informal arrangements with friends and relatives will not qualify for subsidies. Tax deductions for child care provide some help, but for low-income families the tax deductions are not enough.

Commissioner Roemer has suggested offering tax incentives to businesses that provide child care facilities for their employees. Another option is expanding the homemaker credit that the State Legislature approved this year. For too long in our society, we have failed to recognize adequately the contribution of a parent who stays home to care for his or her children.

I hope you also will pay attention to housing policies as they affect families. Many families find that keeping a roof over their heads is a tremendous economic struggle. The situation is perhaps worst for large families. They are often unable to purchase a home, and they frequently are discriminated against in rental housing. Even if a family is able to rent a place, the rent soon may be raised beyond the family's means. Another move is necessary, the children are uprooted from their schools and the adults are separated from newly found neighbors and friends.

I also hope you will develop recommendations for enhancing the partnership between parents and schools. Schools probably are second only to the family in shaping our behaviors and values. Certainly education plays a vital role in determining our opportunities for worthwhile lives and good jobs.

Considering the role of schools in strengthening families could be part of a broader discussion of how government policies can foster strong neighborhoods. Now that so many of us have been uprooted from traditional family environments, we depend more than ever on a supportive network of neighbors and community groups. When neighborhoods are strong, the residents can tackle problems together. They can develop projects that provide young people and senior citizens with useful functions and creative outlets. Individuals, businesses, churches, the communications media and other private agencies need to join with government in focusing on ways to improve neighborhoods.

One successful example of private aid in Minneapolis is the Greater Minneapolis Metropolitan Housing Corporation, which provides seed monies for neighborhood housing rehabilitation projects.

In all of your discussions, I hope you'll consider the need for public policies to allow families to make their own decisions as much as possible. We need to remove rules and restrictions that deprive families of flexibility, whether it be in day care arrangements, in care of the elderly, or in housing.

I've requested an interagency committee to inspect carefully state policies and programs affecting children and families. The committee will forward its recommendations to the Task Force on Families.

When we look at how public policies affect families, the agenda seems almost endless. That's why it's important to recognize that this conference can be only a beginning. You can identify changes that need immediate consideration and some that are more appropriate for long-range study.

I want to assure you that the proceedings of this conference will not be allowed to gather dust. The results of your discussions today and tomorrow will be a constant guide for my office, the Task Force on Families, and the Interagency Committee on Young Children and Families.

Thank you very much for attending. I look forward to hearing your views and concerns.



# American Families: A Historical View

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**“The American family has been seen as beleaguered, endangered, possibly on the verge of extinction, for at least a century now. The sense of crisis is hardly new; with some allowance for periodic ebb and flow, it seems an inescapable undercurrent of our modern life and consciousness.”** — John Demos

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John Demos, a professor of History from Brandeis, presented three images of the American family, each from a different period of American history. The first image, the *family as community*, prevailed from colonial times to the early decades of the nineteenth century. The second, the *family as refuge*, began in the 1820's and the power of this image continues into the 1970's. The emerging image of the American family today in Demos' opinion is the *family as encounter group*.

In choosing this approach to the history of the American family, he points out that these images have been created only by that group of upper class New England Protestants we have labeled “WASPS”. He maintains that this controlling elite has traditionally set styles and norms in this country which prevail even for those who may not agree with them at all. He believes, therefore, that it is legitimate to examine these dominant images, whether or not they apply to all social and economic levels of society.

In the early years of this country, the family was seen as a miniature of the larger society; likewise the community reflected on a larger scale the values of the home. One mirrored the other.

Family life was something which was largely taken for granted. Families were not self-conscious about the “goodness” or “badness” of family life as such; other areas of life were of more social concern to them.

The basic family unit was usually a married couple with naturally-born offspring, but likely to include, in addition to various kin, apprentices, orphans, servants, and occasionally even convicts or indigent people assigned to the family by local authorities. Work was centered in the family, with all members of the household — young and old, male and female — laboring together to produce life's necessities. Education, health care, leisuretime activities, many aspects of religious worship also took place largely within the family. The “master” or “mistress” of each family directed the roles of individual family members within the larger community.

Conversely, the community was interested in the well-being of individual families, sometimes admonishing a couple to “live more peaceably together”, or threatening an unruly child with the “stubborn child” laws of early New England, which prescribed the death penalty for persistent disobedience to parents.

As life in America became more urban during the early nineteenth century, and as the family and the community became less intertwined with one another, American family life became self-conscious — something to be talked and thought about, written and worried

about. During this period the myth of the family's golden past was born. People in 1850 were deploring rising rates of divorce and desertion, permissive child-rearing practices, woman's discontent with her assigned role. An ideal state of domestic life, declared by these new doomsayers, had somehow been tragically lost. Whether or not it had ever actually existed is a moot question, but nevertheless it is a question that continues to haunt many efforts — public and private — to help the family.

The new urban world of mid-nineteenth century America seemed to many an exhausting and threatening place in which to live. To survive it, a man needed a refuge, a place where he could relax, feel secure and ready himself for further sorties into the “jungle” of the larger community. The home and the community, rather than being inextricably intertwined, had become separate spheres, with sharply differing strategies and values.

The women of the family were expected to remain at home, creating tranquility, order and good cheer as well as garments, bread and gardens. They were expected to be morally superior to the men of the family, selfless in their devotion to homes and families. The men became both the sole breadwinners and representatives of the family to the larger community. They were responsible for the family's “success” or “failure”. The children in these families were being trained, according to their sex, to assume one of these traditional roles. Family life, at this time, was as much a tightly closed circle of reciprocal obligations as it was a refuge.

The notion of the *family as refuge* is still influential today, for society's “jungle” has been replaced not by a “pleasant meadow” but by a “rat race”. A rat race is less threatening than a “jungle”, but suggests a monotonous and rather meaningless life. Today's family, therefore, is being asked to provide not only a place for rest and renewal but also for recreation, excitement, and an antidote to the apathy and boredom that goes with such a work life.

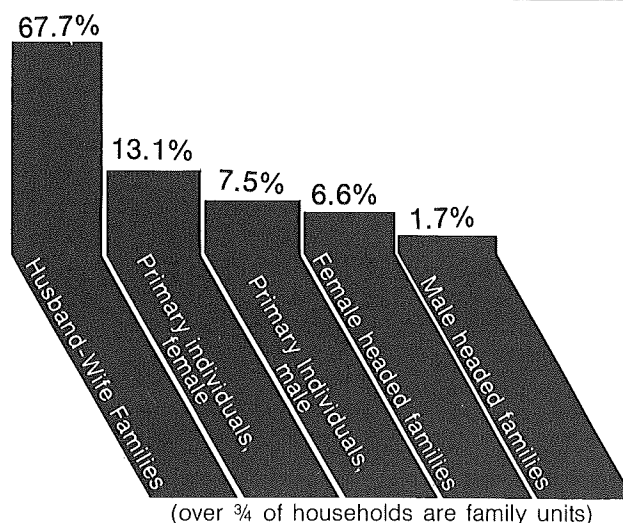
Where the mid-nineteenth century family was burdened with heavy obligations to each family member, the mid-twentieth century family is saddled with excessive expectations of various family members, i.e., helping individual members feel alive, brightening what might otherwise be individually gray landscapes. In short, the family is expected to fulfill unmet personal needs. But when it does not live up to these new expectations, it is often regarded by unfulfilled members as an encumbrance, an institution which inhibits the quest for a full exploration of self.

Demos maintains that the institution of the family has become overloaded with compensatory functions: providing a refuge and/or filling a void. In addition, he believes that Americans have isolated family life as the primary — sometimes the only — setting for *caring* relations between people. Because of this, the nation has become self-conscious about family life and apprehensive about its vitality.

In spite of this fear, the United States stands almost alone among Western industrialized countries in having no coherent family policy. It is these "images" — habits, attitudes and values rooted in history — which Demos believes partly explains public indifference to the difficult conditions in which many families are forced to live.

"The historian may think that he understands such a predicament; he does not, however, know how to change it."

Minnesota households by family status, 1977.



## Minnesota Families

### A Demographic View

**"The word 'family' can be used to mean many things, from the conjugal pair to the 'family of man', and it is therefore imperative to begin with a clear definition of how the word will be used here."**

— Hazel Reinhardt

Dr. Robert Leik of the Minnesota Family Studies Center opened this session with an outline of the many centers in Minnesota which are engaged in family research. But he stressed the need for more and better data.

Then Hazel Reinhardt, the State Demographer and her associate, Kathy Gustafson presented the latest demographic findings of a statewide household survey conducted in April, 1977.

The demographers were careful to remind the audience that each definition used was used in a specific way. For example, the word "family", not only in Reinhardt's and Gustafson's presentations but also throughout this Conference, refers to two or more individuals who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption, and who are living together under one roof. A "household" refers to any persons living together under one roof. A "primary individual" is a person living alone or with non-relatives only. "Kin" are all persons related by blood, marriage, or adoption, but not living together under one roof.

The image of a typical family is usually this: a husband who works, a wife who doesn't work outside the home, and two children. The Bureau of Labor Statistics even provides an urban budget for such a family. (The husband is thirty-eight years old; the children are an eight year old girl and a thirteen year old boy.) But demographic and social changes over the past few decades have made this image atypical. Only 7% of all Minnesota husband-wife families have this composition.

It is important to realize that attempts to create a picture of a typical family are destined to fail. There are many ways to be a "family" today. Each type has

differing characteristics, differing needs. And also the needs of any given family type (e.g. the female-headed family) may not be commensurate with its percentage in the total population.

Reinhardt underscored the following points in updating a picture of Minnesota families:

1. While households in Minnesota have increased 16% since 1970, families have increased by only 11%. In 1977, there were 1,333,000 households in Minnesota and 1,014,000 families.

2. Of these one million plus families, 89% were in the husband-wife category, 9% were female-headed families, 2% other-male-headed families.

3. 45% of all families have no children under the age of eighteen living at home. Of those with children, families with children under six have declined except in households headed by a female.

4. Two-person families have increased since 1970, and families of six or more persons have decreased.

5. The number of never-married females has increased, especially in the 25-34 age group.

6. For the first time in Minnesota's history, divorced women represent more than half (50.7%) of female-headed families. Formerly, widows outnumbered divorcees in heading these families.

7. Twin Cities Metropolitan Area (Region 11) has more female-headed families, a higher proportion of children under eighteen living at home, and more primary individuals than the balance of the state.

8. More women who head families are under thirty-five, have less than twelve years of education, have no earners and less income, than are men who head husband-wife families.

## Employment and Economic Status

Gustafson focused on the economic and employment status of Minnesota families. Her main points:

1. Most family heads are employed (81.3%) but higher unemployment is found among female family heads.
2. Families with more than one earner outnumber single earner families.
3. Multi-earner families, of course, have higher family incomes. Since 52% of husband-wife families and only 24% of female-headed families have more than one income, these figures partially explain the much lower incomes of female-headed families.
4. Over 50% of mothers with children under eighteen living at home are employed, and about half of these work part-time.
5. Child care arrangements are made primarily for children under six, and usually in another person's home.

The official standard index of who lives in poverty in this country is the federal government's "poverty line." The government computes where the line will be drawn each year by taking the cost of a basic "food basket" for a family and multiplying by three. In 1975, the poverty line for a non-farm family of two parents and two children was drawn at \$5456; the line for farm families is drawn at 85% of the non-farm family figure. The poverty line varies by number of persons in the family, sex of head, and farm residence.

Gustafson also reported the following information based on data from the Survey of Income and Education, conducted in 1975 by the Census Bureau:

1. The number and percent of Minnesota families living below the poverty line decreased from 76,000 (8.2%) in 1970, to 63,500 (6.4%) in 1975.
2. Because of the low average income of female-headed families, almost one out of four of these families had incomes below the poverty line. This was the same proportion as in 1970.
3. *Nationally*, in 1975, one out of three female-headed families was living below the poverty line as compared with one out of eighteen husband-wife families. More than 25% of persons aged sixty-five and over lived below the poverty line in 1970.
4. The "poverty population", both in Minnesota and nationwide, is dominated by female headed families and the elderly.

Both Reinhardt and Gustafson mentioned important limitations of survey data:

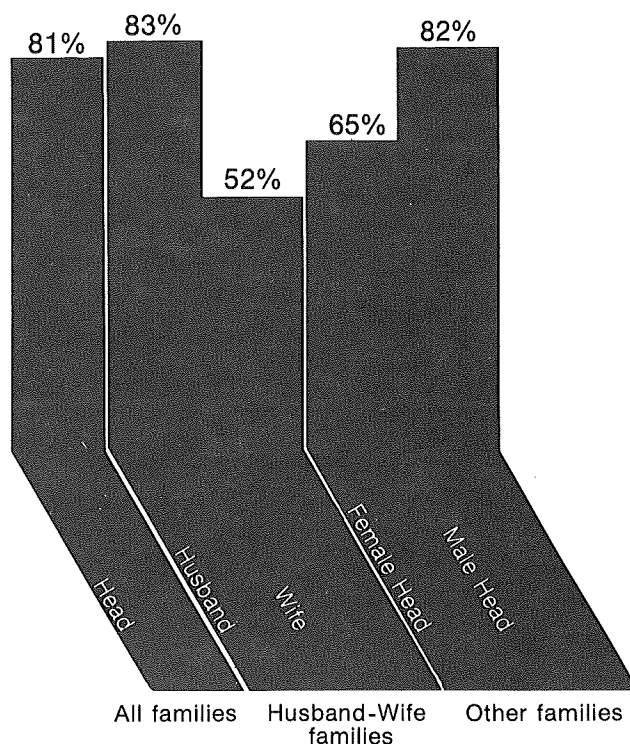
—As in all sample surveys, data is subject to sampling variability and errors of response, including reporting and non-reporting.

—The data was gathered at one point in time and does not represent the life-cycle experience of an individual, e.g. marriage, divorce, job and income changes.

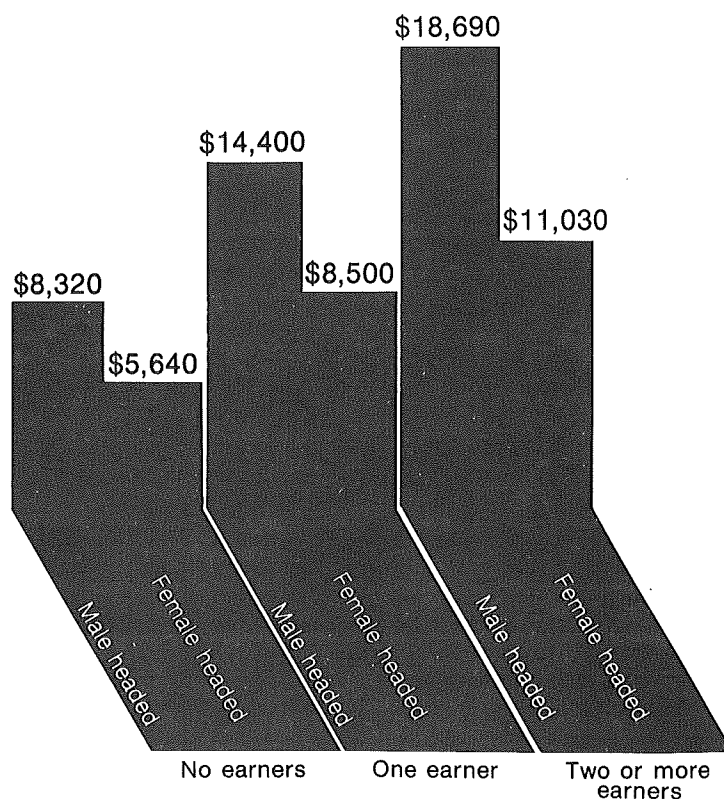
—The data do not address some of the most interesting questions: whether the family is a unit of economic production, how resources are divided within it, how power and authority are distributed within it, its employment history through its life-cycle changes, etc.

The implications of this new picture of Minnesota families were explored throughout the rest of the Conference.

Labor force participation rates by family status, 1977.



Median yearly income by family type and number of earners, 1977





# Pressures Common To All Families

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**All families, regardless of individual make-up or special problems, are affected by housing programs and policies, taxes, and work schedules."**

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## Tax Policy

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The panelists agreed on the far-reaching effect tax policies have on social policies, but they differed on just what these effects are. They stressed the effect on social policies of how taxes are *spent* — the growing public resistance to both increased taxes and increased spending, the need for long-range tax policies; and what the results of wanting both tax cuts and more services are likely to be.

**"I suspect that the allowance for deduction of mortgage interest on the income tax may be the tax policy with the most effect on the family, because it helped to cause, along with transportation policies, the dispersal of families into single-family developments across this country and in this state."** — William Kelly

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William Kelley, Chairman of the State House Tax Committee, went on to say that this mortgage interest deduction, combined with Minnesota's Homestead Credit and Circuit Breaker Laws, encourages high home ownership rates: 85% of Minnesota families own their homes, while 72% of families across the nation are home owners.

He cited these tax laws as an example of tax policy becoming social policy, in this case giving government approval to the "traditional family." Other examples of social attitudes implicit in tax policies: the Child Care Tax Credit and the Homemaker Tax Credit.

In Kelly's opinion, however: "state taxes really have a marginal impact on families. Personal value judgements about how people are going to live are much more pervasive in how their family develops than anything we can do in tax policy."

He stressed a second point: "The more important side of the equation is not our taxes at all but how they are spent." Tax policies, he felt, are overrated as far as their social impact is concerned. More attention should be directed to policies of public expenditure.

**"Our tax structure has apparently grown, as all tax structures have, in response to a good deal of constituent pressure . . . I think we are now at a time when we had best begin to develop some long range plan and find out what we want to look like as a state ten years down the road."**

— William McCutcheon

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William McCutcheon, Chairman of the State Senate Tax Committee, maintains there is no long-range policy in Minnesota, that policies are subject to change within relatively short periods of time and are always subject to pressures of expediency. Both factors result in sometimes short-sighted and whimsical implementation of social policy.

"Far more social policy is drafted and enacted into law in the tax committees than in any other committee that exists because we control the mechanics that manipulate the dollars before the state ever collects them." He gave as an example the Working Poor Tax Credit.

He cautioned that while there is growing resistance to tax increases, it must be realized that tax policy reform will necessarily mean loss of money for programs. He suggested several factors (in addition to high taxes) that may have caused the California "tax revolt": public ignorance of what tax dollars buy and don't buy; resentment of how revenues are raised; and inflation. An inflation of expectations is also an important factor McCutcheon felt. And one none of us has any control over, because we have yet to find the first person to say 'I don't want more.'

**"If Minnesota reduced its spending for education and highways to the national average, it could easily rank below the national average in taxes."** — Gerald Christenson

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Gerald Christenson, Commissioner of the Department of Finance, explained that 76% of the state's budget goes for education and property tax relief in one form or another; 14% is spent on health, welfare and corrections. Only 10% remains, therefore, to be used by all other state agencies.

Minnesota, he said is not only a high tax state but also a high service state. What kinds of services do families get for their taxes? He cited quality education, encouragement to home ownership, help for physically, emotionally, and mentally handicapped. He questioned whether Minnesotans would be content to live in a low-service state with low taxes.

Christenson pointed out that a tax revolution took place in Minnesota between 1971 and 1976. In 1971, 41% of state income was derived from property taxes, 38% from income taxes. In 1976, the ratio was reversed, with 49% coming from income taxes, and only 25% from property taxes.

He believes that the state should take another look at personal tax credits, which were raised recently from \$21 to \$40.

"A forty dollar tax credit does not go far to pay for \$1300 worth of braces on a child's teeth . . . But we should be realistic enough to know there is no perfect tax system . . . But Minnesota, from my perspective, has a generally good and fair tax system.

## Housing

**"I once lived in an apartment where there was one eighty gallon hot water heater to serve a thirty-three unit building. At this same apartment, I had to go for three weeks without a sink, twenty-four days without a stove, and three months without having my mail delivered, because repairs were not made. My attempts to have these repairs made ended with my getting an eviction notice. I then decided to stay and fight, thinking that the laws were on my side. WRONG!"** — Ava Baciak

The crisis in rental housing for families is becoming more acute as larger units are converted to smaller ones or to condominiums. In addition, low vacancy rates (currently, 1.9%) in the Twin Cities drive rents up and allow landlords to impose a "no-children" policy. Many communities have no housing codes; others do not enforce the codes they have. Result: female-headed households with children, most of which have incomes hovering around the poverty level, must pay high rents for inadequate, often poorly maintained quarters.

Although a large percentage of subsidized units are occupied by female-headed families, subsidized housing is not always the answer. Waiting lists are long, and a serious shortage of two and three-bedroom units exists. Yet government regulations specify how many bedrooms, per unit, per family, are required to qualify for a subsidy.

A case was described of a woman and her three children living in a cramped, two-bedroom apartment in a Minnesota suburb. She was ineligible for a subsidy in that apartment, since regulations state that a family with three children must occupy a three-bedroom apartment. Larger, two-bedroom apartments (but no three-bedroom ones) were available in that suburb. Yet the government could not help her. Her options: uproot her family and move elsewhere, or remain — unsubsidized — in a setting in which her children were beginning to feel at home.

Direct housing subsidies provided by the federal government (as distinguished from the far larger subsidies given to middle and upper income home owners in the form of tax breaks) go largely to the young, the poor, and members of minority groups.

Recommendations of the housing workshop panelists included:

1. Take a look at a stateside, uniform housing code and see that its provisions, once adopted, are enforced.
2. Take a second look at the current attempt to disperse low-income housing from the inner city to the

suburbs. Most low-income families rely on public transportation and day care services for young children, both of which are inadequate in most suburban communities.

3. Take a second look at the roadblocks inherent in some regulations governing eligibility for subsidized housing.

4. Take an *innovative* look at ways to accommodate families with children, families without children, and landlords.

In discussing home ownership, it was reported that home buyers have changed rather dramatically in recent years, largely because of change in federal credit laws. Whereas formerly, young people — married and unmarried, with children and without — postponed home buying until their situations were stabilized, now banks are lending to young couples — married and unmarried, often without children, but usually with two jobs in the household.

This trend evoked two concerns. First, these buyers may not appreciate the enormity of the financial burden they are undertaking — the high interest rates and the length of the mortgages. Second, they are effective competitors for the state's steadily dwindling supply of single-family houses and mortgage money; thus, they contribute to the skyrocketing costs of buying and financing a house.

In a discussion of the tight money market for mortgages, it was explained how banks get the money they lend: from savers and from interest earned by the bank on loans and other investments. At the present time, because of a combination of economic factors, banks do not have large amounts of extra money on hand to lend. To help loosen up this tight market, a "better marriage" between the public and the private sectors was advocated.

The attention of the session was directed to the energy crisis and its effect on housing for families. Energy costs, too, have soared right along with rents, purchase prices, and interest rates. These costs place further and inescapable financial pressure on all families, be they renters or homeowners.

The elderly, on fixed incomes which they thought would be sufficient to sustain them in retirement, are suffering greatly from these increased costs. Their energy needs, because of age and physical condition, are often greater than those of the general population, but even with conservation practices, they may find their energy bills are higher than their mortgage payments once were.

The "Catch 22" phenomenon in utility bills — as people use less energy each year, the costs go higher — must be done away with. Suggestions for doing this included tax deductions for insulation and other energy-saving devices, and a thorough overhaul of rate structures.

## Work Schedules

### What is . . .

- . . . **Compressed time?** Full-time work with more hours per day but fewer days per week. Example: Four ten-hour days.
- . . . **Flextime?** An employee has some choice about starting and stopping work. Example: Eight hours, starting — between 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m., and quitting — between 3:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m.
- . . . **Staggered Hours?** Similar to flextime, but choice of hours remains the same over a period of time. Choice can be revised periodically.
- . . . **Regular part-time?** Employees are regularly employed on a pre-scheduled job but do work requiring less than full-time, year-round attendance. May be part-day, part-week, part-month, or part-year.
- . . . **Job Pairing?** Two or more people are jointly responsible for the completion of a full-time job.
- . . . **Job Sharing?** Two or more people are individually responsible for completion of an assigned portion of one full-time job.

Rigid work schedules often interfere with other needs of many workers and families. Alternative, less rigid work schedules have been shown to benefit men as well as women, employers as well as employees.

Merry Moen, substituting for Minnesota's Commissioner of Personnel, reported that 50% of the full-time state employees surveyed expressed interest in Flextime. A Flextime pilot project, under way for six weeks in the Department of Personnel, has met with enthusiastic response; its problems have been minimal. However, no clear policy as yet exists for offering all state employees alternative work schedules. Moen felt that Job Sharing might be more difficult to implement and would certainly cost more.

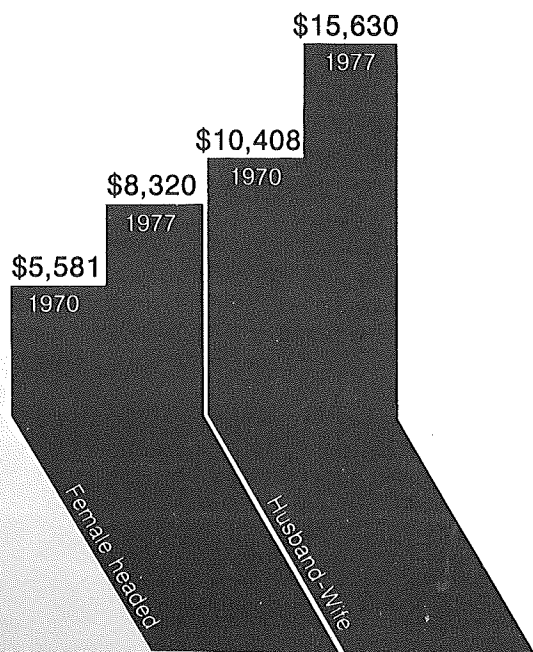
Speaking for the state employees union, Robert Currie expressed more skepticism about the benefits of alternative work schedules for employees. He wondered if such schedules might not jeopardize some of the existing rights of workers and what price employers might be expected to ask of workers in exchange for more flexible arrangements. He felt that it would be more appropriate for alterations in work schedules to be proposed by the workers themselves through the collective bargaining process.

Michael Hopp gave a brief history of the flextime work program at Control Data Corporation, begun with a pilot program in 1972. Flextime is now available for workers in all Control Data Corporation offices and plants and is used by 65% of the employees. Hopp declared that the program has resulted in increased productivity, improved morale, and a decrease in commuting time, tardiness and absenteeism. Very few abuses of the program were reported, and managers found improved communication between superiors and subordinates and between the company and the public.

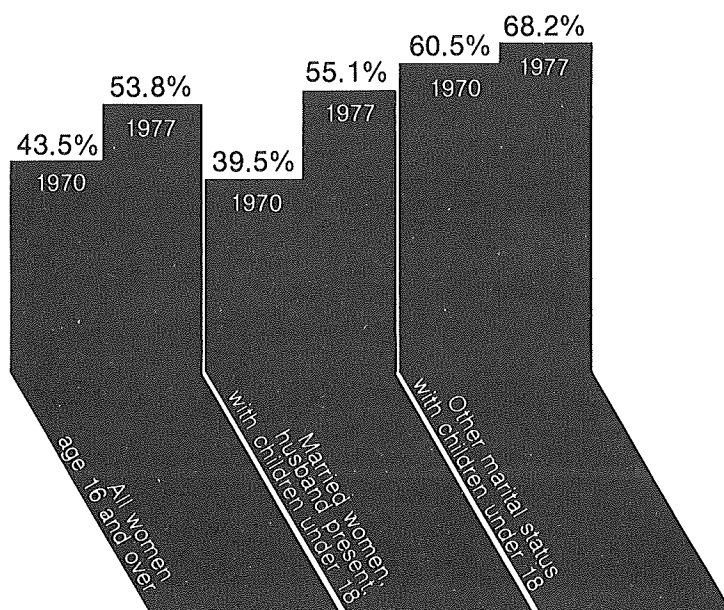
Part-time versions of alternative work schedules do raise some questions however. What about fringe benefits for the part-time worker and the cost to the employer of these benefits?

It was concluded that more study is needed to determine both the pluses and minuses of alternative work schedules, other than Flextime. Would other options have more or less effect on workers' lives and families than Flextime appears to? Will these other options be as simple and inexpensive to implement as Flextime?

Median yearly income by family type, 1970 and 1977.



Labor force participation rates of women by marital status and presence of children, 1970 and 1977.



# Pressures On Diverse Family Situations

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**“Not all families face the same kinds of problems. The intact family with pre-school children has quite different needs from an elderly couple, or from a foster family with a handicapped child.”**

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## Single Parent Families

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**“The single-parent family is definitely not an endangered species. It is predicted that 45% of babies born in 1977 will experience living in single-parent families.”** — Esther Wattenberg

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Wattenberg

The term, “single-parent family” is a demographic one. It can include single parents who have never married or who have been widowed. But in the minds of many people, a single parent family consists of a divorced mother with several children who have been deprived of a “normal family life”. This deprivation is seen from different perspectives, depending on whether the “single parent” is a man or a woman. Burdened with value judgments, the term itself often becomes an additional pressure for the members of a single parent family.

Lurline Baker, a single parent with four sons, sees the family as “a unit of people caring and sharing in the same household”. She maintains that there are many families, with both husband and wife present in the home, who are nevertheless single-parent families. For most of her married life, her husband worked at two jobs. He was the breadwinner who lived in the household. During these eighteen years, she said, she was actually a single-parent living in what is called a husband-wife family. She urged that negative images of the single-parent family be dropped, “If a child has a mother in the home but no father, then he’s something of an outcast in society. If he has a father in the home but no mother, well — that poor father and that poor motherless child!”

Michael Pierce, a single-parent father of two pre-school children, agreed with her statement, saying that he is usually able to get a spur-of-the-moment sitter from among his sympathetic neighbors. As a member of a program called “Parents and Children Growing Together”, he had occasion to hear the experiences of many single-parent mothers, and society’s view of them was quite different from its view of him, he said. However, he said that he was familiar with the pressures shared by all single parents: trying to cope simultaneously with the stress of a full-time job, household chores, children’s problems, a personal and social life for himself, plus an ever-present and nagging sense of guilt, doubt, loneliness. But the one problem he did not face with women who were single parents were the overwhelming economic odds.

Some of these economic problems reported from latest U.S. Census Bureau information are:

— Of families headed by women, one out of three are living below the poverty level; of families headed by men, the figure is one out of eighteen.

— The median income for families headed by women is \$8200; for husband-wife families, it is \$14,200.

— Of all divorced women and their dependent children, one-half will spend an average of twenty-five months on welfare.

Nearly half of these AFDC women have low-paying, part-time jobs, with few if any benefits. This low job status results partly from their youth and lack of training; and partly from a work-place unresponsive to their family needs.

Single parents who are women are younger now than they were seven years ago. The high risk age (20-29) for marriage break-up coincides with the ages women are having most children. Add to this fact the growing percentages of children born out of wedlock, the relatively recent trend for these mothers to keep their children, and the age of the mothers (over half were born to teenagers), and another aspect of the overwhelming economic problems many single-parent women face can be seen more clearly.

“A woman can creep, crawl or leap out of poverty,” says Esther Wattenberg, of the University of Minnesota. “But if she leaps, it is usually by holding the hand of a new man.”

Wattenberg suggests some questions policy-makers might consider for alleviating pressures on single-parent families. What can or ought to be done about the rising incidence of teenage pregnancy? How does financial instability relate to marital instability? Should we as a nation insist that there be a minimal level of support for children from broken homes? Is it not possible to reform the work-place to fit individual situations, e.g. part-time work with no loss of benefits, a wide variety of services available on weekends? And finally, what about the possibility of “respite care”, for both single-parent men and women, an occasional holiday, with pay and without children, for emotional recuperation?

## Child Care

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**“Not only are women interested in developing their own personal lives by going back to work, but in fact it’s a necessity now for both husbands and wives to be in the work force if the family is to enjoy the quality of life we all hope to attain.”** — Sue Harrington

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**“As a single person and the custodial parent of two school-age children, neither my children nor I have the luxury of choosing whether to use child care services or not.”** — Mary Alice Pappas

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Between 1960 and 1970, the number of households with two wage earners more than doubled, as did the number of single-parent households headed by women. Although the number of children decreased during this period, the number needing child care actually increased because of the increase in employed mothers. Yet child care facilities, throughout the country as well as in Minnesota, are often unavailable: almost 25% of the nation’s pre-school children are taken to work by parents or left home alone. Where facilities are available, they include day care centers, day care in private homes, in-home care. In Minnesota, facilities to meet the needs of two to five year olds seem to be available, but care for infants, toddlers and school-age children is far from adequate.

Some recommendations of the workshop:

1. The problem of inadequate day care facilities, including unlicensed facilities without quality control, must be brought to the public’s attention.
2. True costs of day care cannot be paid by middle-income families and should not be born by providers. Therefore, a sliding fee scale should be instituted.
3. In order to attract and keep quality providers, they must be paid more than the sub-standard wages they now receive. To depend on subsidized and volunteer workers for child care is to underline how little value is placed on children in this society.
4. Employers should be both urged and motivated to consider child care in the “package” they offer to employees.
5. Many more places are needed in Minnesota for infant, toddler and after-school care.

## Adolescence

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**“The one thing to keep in mind when we think about how policies affect the family with adolescents is this: the adolescent is moving away from the protection of and dependence on his family and moving toward independence. In some cases —**

**maybe in many cases — the rights and needs of the adolescent and those of his parents may be in conflict.”** — Diane Hedin

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This session pointed up that adolescents in this society dwell in a murky limbo between childhood and adulthood.

For example:

The law requires that child abuse be reported if the victim is under age eighteen, that sexual abuse be reported if the victim is under sixteen. In one national study, children are grouped in a category labeled “ten years and under”; another group, termed “youth”, are those between the ages of ten and twenty-four. In its last session, the Minnesota State Legislature passed a law designed to provide children with equal protection under the law. The word “children” was not redefined. Thus the question — “who is an adolescent?” — has not been answered by policy makers. The adolescent, according to many professionals in psychology, sociology, and related fields, is neither a child nor an adult. Apparently, the issue under discussion determines his status.

This state of affairs raises a host of questions when trying to formulate equitable policies. Diane Hedin from the Center of Youth Development and Research asks: to whom do we direct policies — to the whole family or to individual members? Corollaries to this question, she points out, are: How can the state take into account simultaneously the rights and welfare of both the adolescent and the family? How can it make fair policies for delivery of health services, especially in those areas relating to sexual activity and drugs? How can it calculate the effects of teenage employment on the family, and of “no retirement” policies on the adolescent?

Lindsay Arthur, a District Court Judge, posed another question: if the state approves unilateral decision making by the child vis a vis the family, who is to be responsible for the consequences of those decisions? Who, for example, will be responsible for the misused charge account, the stolen car which has been wrapped around a tree, the child born to an adolescent mother. Arthur believes what he terms “these new reforms” fail to ask whether adolescents have the maturity to evaluate their decisions and to take the consequences of them.

Ideal decision-making, in the view of Shawn Mahoney, an eighteen year old panelist, is accomplished when all members of a family can sit down together and discuss the matter, when each individual family member is able, in this group setting, to express his feelings and opinions about a situation.

Arthur agreed that this is indeed the best decision-making process. However, the ideal does not always obtain. And when it does not, Arthur continues to wonder who makes the decisions, since parents are finally responsible, laws notwithstanding, for the results of their children’s decisions.

Or are they? At present, the issue in Minnesota is as murky as the status of the adolescent.



## Adoption and Foster Care

**"Even if reasonable efforts were made in the areas of prevention and early intervention, there could continue to be children requiring placement in foster care due to mental illness, physical illness, drug and alcohol addiction, neglect and abuse, or extremely dysfunctional family situations. The tragedy is that large numbers of children for whom foster care was intended to be temporary are locked into permanent lives in foster homes."** —

Zetta Feder

Zetta Feder, a Foster Care Consultant, declared that the major concern about foster care in Minnesota, is its tendency to be a permanent arrangement rather than the temporary one it was meant to be.

Too often, children are allowed to drift on indefinitely in situations which ought to be resolved with some degree of permanence. Too little is being done to help children cope with the emotional difficulties of foster care placement. And foster parents receive too little help with the difficult task of trying to be parents to a strange child in a temporary situation.

All these deficiencies might be remedied, Feder felt, by increased quality and quantity of casework services — an expensive remedy, since time and additional well-trained staff mean more money.

"We realize that we are asking for a dollar investment in foster care, but we also realize that this investment would be more than offset by reducing the length of time children spend in foster care."

Judith Anderson, an editorial consultant for the North American Council on Adoptable Children, pointed out that we are talking about how to save human beings, not just dollars. She urged the identification, within the foster care system of those children who might be available for adoption and the recruitment of families to adopt them. She added that on-going services to these families should be provided, as well as subsidies for families who adopt "special needs" children.

Robert Aitken, Director of Social Services of the Minnesota Chippewa Tribe, said that the Indian child is five times more likely than the child of another ethnic group to be placed in foster care or to be adopted, and in spite of Department of Public Welfare rules which advocate otherwise, 70% are placed in non-Indian homes many of which have no interest in or make no provision for the preservation of Indian culture.

"Indian children, growing into adolescence under such circumstances, have identity problems and take their frustrations out on themselves and on society." He strongly recommended that local social service agencies work closely with tribal governments in the placement of all Indian children.

Other recommendations to come out of this session:

- Frequent mandatory review of foster care cases.
- More program and technical assistance from the state to local agencies.

- More skill training to caseworkers in all agencies.
- Special attention to foster care needs of all minority group families.

- Subsidized adoption, so that adoptive parents are able to receive the same benefits as foster parents.

Emily Anne Staples, a State Senator, stated that she thought a high priority should be put on funds for foster care when the next legislative session considers overall funding for family programs.

## The Disabled

**"If professionals don't know where to obtain help, how can an individual family know?"** — Marge Goldberg

Families with disabled members have problems obtaining the services available to them because of conflicting regulations and eligibility criteria, overlapping mandates, and policies and guidelines that are without the force of law. Help is available to these families in a variety of state departments and agencies, but individuals are often denied access to aid because they cannot locate an "entrance place" to the system.

To correct this shortcoming, Marge Goldberg, who chairs the Minnesota Committee on the Handicapped, recommended a knowledgeable interagency caseworker who would provide information and referral. She added that the need for advocates or ombudsmen in this area reflects the inadequacy of the existing system.

Eunice Davis, a child development director, emphasized the need for support at the onset of a handicapping illness and for ongoing services in the home after the acute or hospitalized phase is over.

"We have gone too far in promoting out-of-home care," she said, adding that "if adequate care is to be provided in the home, nursing and/or homemaking services must be offered to assist the family."

Richard Ramberg, from the Minnesota Council on the Handicapped, added that occasional "respite care" is needed to relieve families of the continuous heavy responsibilities for caring for the disabled. He also asked that persons who have handicaps have access to opportunities, rather than merely dependent care. The handicapped, he said, need incentive to go to work — not discouragement. One such incentive would be an "income disregard system" which would continue services even in the presence of some income.

Thomas Mangan, a state representative, summed up the panel's discussion: "It's important we make a positive assessment. What can this person do, not what is his handicap?"

From the audience, Governor Perpich added that changes in the plight of disabled members of society are already taking place in both industry and government. "The mining industry is using disabled veterans effectively and extensively," he said, "and access modifications to buildings can open many new doors to many people." He added that the state fully intends to bar leasing of buildings with barriers and not to renew leases unless the buildings now occupied by state offices are made barrier-free by the time the lease is up.

## The Elderly

**"Acceptance of aging, and its end product — death, is hard to achieve."** — Marlene

Munig

Families with elderly members to care for face several common and pervasive problems: unwillingness or inability to accept the facts of aging, ambivalence about the aging member and guilt about the ambivalence. With loss of the extended family as a support, "unextended families" often find care of their elderly financially, psychologically and physically burdensome.

While institutionalization tends to fragment families, its positive aspects should not be overlooked: the security of special care, the company of other residents, and for the family, relief from some of its burdens.

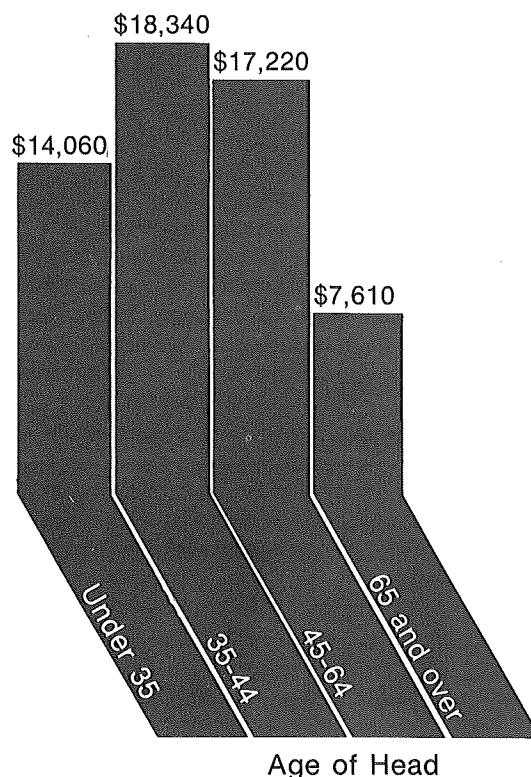
Many alternative forms of care should exist — homemaker services, home health care, adult day care, etc. But public awareness and acceptance of these alternative forms is difficult to achieve. New programs are often viewed with suspicion, since graft has been so widespread in this field. Yet guidelines have not been established to help form and evaluate alternative forms of care.

Proposed new facilities in the private sector often find themselves in a dilemma when seeking funds from government. Before funding is available, the program must be approved, yet funds are needed in order to establish a program. In addition, both families and agencies want to see specific and documented improvement in the quality of care, and often such improvement is not and cannot be in the picture, nor can subjective improvement be measured or demonstrated.

A successful alternative program is the Northeast Adult Day Care Project, in Virginia, Minnesota. The facility is available from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. weekdays, and offers not only daytime supervision, but also a protective environment, rehabilitative programming, social, recreational and craft activities, nursing and medical services, counseling and educational services, plus transportation and nutritious meals. In operation for less than a year, it provides an alternative to nursing home care when less than twenty-four hour care is needed, and aims to avoid premature and/or inappropriate institutionalization and provide an opportunity for a gradual transition from hospital to community life or from home to institutional living.

The workshop participants agree that establishment of more such alternative forms of care should be encouraged.

Median yearly income by age of family head, 1977.



## Chemical Dependency and Mental Health

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**“Alcoholism develops within the family system, even if the alcoholic passes from one family system into another; and it is maintained, albeit unwittingly, and nourished by families, even as they struggle with it.”** — Terence Williams

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Chemical dependency and mental illness are major causes of family breakdown. Yet the social stigma attached to both, plus denial of the problems by families and individuals, create barriers to diagnosis and treatment.

A family usually plays an important role in both the development of the illness and in subsequent treatment and rehabilitation. Therefore the family should not be overlooked as a powerful treatment resource. Nor should its other members be overlooked as possible candidates for treatment themselves.

Health insurance, however, does not extend, in most cases, to treatment for family members. This fact handicaps not only the rehabilitation of the individual but also of the family itself.

The panel spotlighted areas where the needs of these families might be met more adequately:

- Pre-treatment counseling, which can often reverse family deterioration.

- Intervention programs to help families overcome the obstacle of family members who deny there is a problem.

- Total family therapy, paid for by health insurance.

- De-emphasis on treatment and support groups which focus on the individual rather than on the total family.

- More attention to the special circumstances of the single parent family.

- More public education.

### Corrections

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**“Criminal charges in cases involving domestic violence and sexual abuse of children will increase in the future. Knowledge of effective treatment methods is generally limited for families experiencing these problems. The authority of the courts may well have to be invoked to order treatment, and court-related services may have to experiment with models of treatment for these families.”** — Kenneth Young

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Family services for the imprisoned and for those on probation are provided by private and public agencies outside the formal corrections system.

Many correctional clients are chemically dependent and are offered treatment programs, usually involving families. Alternative residential programs are available to some serious offenders, and these also offer a range of choices to families, from learning new parenting skills to total family therapy.

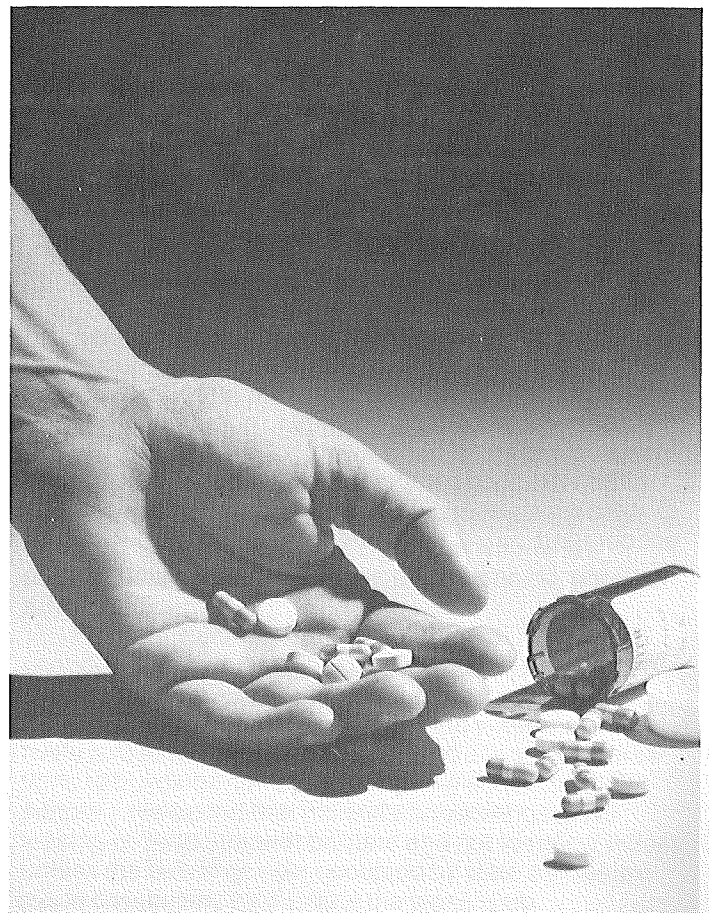
Patt Springhorn, a Parent Education Director, described a program at the Correctional Institution for Women in Shakopee called “Second Chance”. It helps mothers who are inmates and their families to prepare for their reentry into society. The program includes seminars on child development; weekends with children; support groups; “significant other” groups; and help in understanding and using community resources.

Some recommendations:

- The Department of Corrections must assume responsibility for the resistant or potentially dangerous client who cannot realistically be served by community agencies. Experimental programs and methods need to be developed for this population with heavy emphasis on total family treatment.

- The question of whether the courts should order parents of delinquents into treatment and what sanctions can be enforced, needs to be addressed.

- Additional attention needs to be given to the development of chemical dependency programs for the adolescent, with particular emphasis on the creation of out-patient models.





## Violence

**“Violence in families is not a private matter when 40% of the women murdered in this country were murdered by their husbands, when 11% of the men murdered in this country were murdered by their wives. When one out of four women have been sexually assaulted by age eighteen, and 38% of those assaults were committed by family members, when one-fourth of the divorces in this nation were initiated because of violence in the home, then it is time to dispel the myth that violence in families is a private matter.” — Ellen Pence**

Many families consider their homes to be safe refuges, but for some the home has become a battleground of physical and sexual violence. The victims are usually women and children, but men, especially the disabled and the elderly, can be and have been abused also. Family violence is a problem which is as old as the family itself. Historically, governments have been reluctant to interfere with family autonomy; but with more tools and opportunities available today to help with the problem, it is time that the issue be addressed by public policy.

Carolyn Bailey, a Sergeant Investigator of the St. Paul Police Department, discussing child abuse and incest, stated that by the time family violence comes to the attention of the police, it is already a crisis situation, and the family's right to choose services is secondary to immediate protection of the child.

She emphasized the lack of training among professionals to handle physical/sexual abuse cases, adding that an inadequate staff exists to train the professionals. She also expressed the need for changed attitudes in public policy: e.g. beliefs that the wife is the property of the husband, that the children are the property of the parents, that the preservation of the family unit in all cases is of prime importance.

Pointing out that prosecution in cases involving family violence is often hampered because of gaps and loopholes in existing laws, she recommended that these laws be scrutinized carefully and that the absence of legal resources for children be considered by the courts when ordering placement, custody and visitation rights.

Gretchen Schafer described activities of the Ramsey County Child Abuse Team as an example of effective coordination of all the agencies involved in child abuse cases: police, health, welfare, education and the courts. Shared communication among these various agencies, who often have different approaches to the same case, is essential if families and children are to avoid getting caught in the crossfire of the “helping” systems.

The Ramsey County team, which has been functioning for eight years, has developed an overall plan to handle child abuse cases. At the heart of the plan is insistence that the various professionals become effec-



tive team members rather than solo performers. The team secures immediate protective custody of a child with the help of the police department, after which it exercises the expertise of its members.

Marilyn Peterson, from Family Services of St. Paul, outlined major problems concerning “battered women.” Present public policy, she said, often serves to batter the women further.

Housing, both temporary and permanent, is the chief problem for these women. Peterson felt that police and medical personnel are traditionally reluctant to interfere in “family fights” and that knowledge of temporary shelters is often unavailable to abused women. Even when these women find a shelter, they cannot find permanent housing because landlords resent single parent families and because of Housing and Redevelopment Authority regulations regarding eligibility for public housing.

Furthermore when such a woman files a complaint with the city attorney, her assailant is usually released, pending a hearing. Crowded court dockets and low case priority mean the victim and her assailant must wait from six weeks to six months for their hearing, during which time economic necessity often dictates that they live together.

A restraining order is of little help to many battered women. This form of protection is available only to a married woman, and only if she is seeking marital dissolution or legal separation. If Legal Aid is enlisted to file for the order, the wait is also six weeks because of case overload. After the order has been received, violation of it is treated only as a civil offense — of no more moment than a misdemeanor.

Sharon Vaughn, a director of a battered women's shelter, offered recommendations to alleviate some of the problems battered women face. We would not need new laws, she said, if the laws already on the books were enforced. There is a need to shorten lengthy court delays and to integrate existing services. Since battered wives and abused children often exist in the same family, the services to each should be integrated.

# Special Problems of Ethnic Groups

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**“Families belonging to certain ethnic groups confront the same problems as the rest of society . . . Plus a few additional ones . . .”**

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**“Public policy in the 1890’s embraced the Melting Pot solution. This meant that if everyone became American in one generation, there would be no differences to deal with.”** — Kathleen O’Brien

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Minnesota was settled by forty-five different nationality groups. As recently as the 1920’s, more than 20% of the population was foreign-born, and more than 50% were one generation or less removed from their countries of origin. By the late 19th century, the dominant culture in America began to feel threatened by this influx of immigrants and the diversity of life styles they brought with them. The concept of America as the Melting Pot grew up partly in response to this threat.

Today, the Melting Pot theory has been criticized because it fostered a bland homogeneity which eliminated important differences between various groups of people. At the present time, public policy wants to support and encourage ethnic diversity, but with the recognition of differences has come a host of problems.

In addition to the pressures common to all families, and to pressures which vary with differing family situations, members of ethnic minority families face other problems, resulting from their differences with the dominant culture. These differences have their origins in history.

John Taborn, Director of the Black Studies Program at the University of Minnesota, suggested that all families have two kinds of needs. One type of need he labeled “instrumental”. These relate to the family’s survival. Other kinds are “expressive” and these needs relate to a family’s particular identity. He said that too often public policy doesn’t give sufficient consideration to these “expressive” needs and the failure to do so becomes especially noticeable as far as minority families are concerned.

“When people who don’t melt have to deal with public policies which emphasize their instrumental needs at the expense of their expressive needs, they sometimes adapt adversely to society,” he said.

Taborn also pointed out how important it is to get the facts straight before developing public policy based on such “facts.” He cited an example: welfare policy is based to a large extent on the erroneous notion that the black family is matriarchal, when in fact, 80% of black families are two parent families.

One theme that persisted throughout the Conference was a discontent on the part of many minorities with demographic data in general. They felt that such data do not attend to ethnic differences. Since so much of public policy is based on such data, its inadequacies can lead to the obscuring of issues that are critical to minorities.

Another complaint about the Conference was registered by Henry Green Crow, a Native American Planner from the St. Paul Native American Multi-Service Center, who sent a letter explaining why he chose not to participate in the panel. He felt that the time allocated to him was too short a time for him to explore the problems of American Indians.

The consensus of this session seemed to be that government is definitely not sensitive to the problems of ethnic minority groups, which in spite of the fact that they represent only 3% of Minnesota’s population, seem to face a disproportionate number of social problems.

Two issues of special concern at this session were the effects of public school curricula on all minority group families and the effects of Minnesota’s foster-care policies on American Indian families.

Allan Spear, a State Senator, speaking from the audience, said that the question of whether curricula should be developed for the special needs of specific ethnic groups had been an issue hotly debated in recent legislative sessions. Whenever the Federal Government singles out certain groups for special concern, there can be negative as well as positive effects.

Taborn responded that all tax-supported institutions should recognize the cultural plurality of this country. He believed that the special contributions of various groups in the society should go into a universal education so that we can all “feel good about our peoplehood.”

Another member of the audience commented that educational material should be designed for *all* children whether or not they are members of a minority group but that such curricula should reflect an awareness and appreciation of cultural differences.

The State Folklorist, Ellen Stekkert, moderated this session. She concluded that every ethnic group has its own assumptions about what is good for its families. Consequently, it will take complex and thoughtful planning on the part of policy-makers to be responsive to the diverse values represented by so many cultures.



# Causes and Effects of Pressures on Families

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**“What has been, can be, ought to be done to relieve these pressures on the family?”**

**Some of them appear to be inevitable components of the human predicament. Others might respond well to the ministrations of smaller groups such as churches or private agencies.**

**While government clearly is not able to provide panaceas for all these pressures, its policies and programs can go a long way toward alleviating many of them.”**

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## The Family Under Pressure

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**“Most of the families using social services have been thrust into the system because they have become families under pressure. They’ve been put in situations where the stresses have become more than they can handle by themselves, and they’ve had to reach out for help . . . But trying to find the help you need to get you through a stress situation becomes a stress in itself.”** — Kathy Sears

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This session, entitled *The Family Under Pressure*, featured two state commissioners — Michael O’Donnell of Economic Security and Edward Dirkswager of Public Welfare — and four clients of the departments they administer.

Michael O’Donnell said that despite recent decreases in Minnesota’s unemployment and unemployment claims, employment problems are a long way from being solved. He cited the discouraged unemployed, not visible in statistics — the disabled, the veteran, the displaced homemaker. He went on to list the more than twenty programs his agency administers and to ask what these programs actually do for, or against, families. He felt his agency had no answers and urged that a search for some answers be undertaken at once.

He also emphasized the importance of consumer/client input, the necessity of fitting programs to families rather than families to programs, and cautioned that government should be thought of as a facilitator in solving problems rather than a full-fledged and accredited problem-solver.

“All of us need small group support systems to provide our needs for love and nurturance, a sense of self, as well as for our physical needs,” Dirkswager began. Since Biblical times, the family has been this small group support system. What public policy must recognize, and has not recognized to date, is that these needs continue to exist but that for many people the small group support system does not. Thus, Dirkswager

believes, it is absolutely necessary to devise a policy on families, with an impact statement requirement similar to environmental and economic impact statements.

He stated that his department had already begun a family impact study with a review of nineteen major programs it administers. The department has uncovered, for example, the many anti-family elements in the AFDC program, the Medical Assistance program, in mental health programs, and in funding mechanisms for a variety of other programs under his jurisdiction. A Family Task Force has been formed, and as its findings are being considered, new directions in policy are being revealed and undertaken.

Kathy Sears is a single-parent mother of four. The situation that ultimately crippled her and her family occurred when one of her children suffered a medical accident, and as a result of the time she had to spend with him, away from work, she lost her job. This resulted in a lack of money and food. She was forced finally to seek help from social service agencies.

“But these services don’t look at you as a whole person,” she said. “If only someone would sit down with you, right at the beginning, and help you analyze all your needs and resources.” In a crisis situation, a person is unable to bring cool, analytical skills to the various problems. Many of her subsequent difficulties, she maintained, might have been avoided by early counseling, or agency personnel available at hours other than eight to four-thirty, five days a week.

“The structure of the system leaves no room for human dignity,” she said. “You must give up entirely before you can get help. And then it ends up being like a bad marriage: you’re stuck in it because you don’t know how to get out. The system fosters dependence.”

Heather Baum began by saying: “Most women are one man or one job away from the welfare experience.” She urged that each program to help clients should be evaluated for its actual effects on them. Too often, she said, policies are contradictory: e.g., current Department of Public Welfare efforts to force fathers of AFDC children to pay child support. She maintained that if as much energy were spent helping non-welfare women to collect child support, more families would be kept off welfare.

Steve Wrbanick, himself handicapped, is a single parent of two children, one of whom is also handicapped. "The system keeps handicapped people from going to work," he said. "They can never earn enough to pay all their medical costs, and if they have a job, they can lose their aid."

Bernardette Hughes is the mother of seven children, two of whom are handicapped. She stressed the need for help to care for handicapped children at home. She said that an ordinary family cannot afford the costs connected with in-home care, i.e., specialized medical care, special transportation, constructing a barrier-free environment. The bottom line is red ink for most families.

She urged that eligibility for financial help be determined by need, not by income. Otherwise, not only the handicapped child but the whole family suffers. To encourage home care, she suggested the possibility of grants to the handicapped child for housing and transportation.

The panel agreed that too often well-intentioned help for families under pressure is not help at all. Both policies and programs are in need of close examination to discover at which points the help is not helping, at which points it simply becomes an additional pressure.

## Family Impact Analysis

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**"If the world were a demonstration program, it would never have been refunded."** — Sidney Johnson

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Family impact analysis is a new and largely unexplored field, with the lacks and gaps in data and information which might be expected in any new study area. What it proposes to do is to examine the effects of public policies on families. What it hopes to accomplish eventually is to eradicate as far as possible those elements of public policies which have a negative effect on the well-being of the family.

Sidney Johnson is Director of the *Family Impact Seminar*, a program of *George Washington University's Institute for Educational Leadership*. A non-partisan organization, funded without government monies, it is an outgrowth of the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Children and Youth, chaired in 1973 by then Senator Walter Mondale. The twenty-two member Seminar, all of whom are prominent in family studies or services, meets four times a year with policy makers, with representatives of family agencies and organizations and with members of families themselves. Its final report will recommend possible model legislation and is expected to be a significant contribution to the White House Conference on Families scheduled for 1981.

The specific purpose of the Seminar is to test the feasibility of instituting *Family Impact Statements*. But according to Johnson, it would be a mistake to carry the analogy to Environmental Impact Statements too far. "The analogy is useful in some respects," he said. "We would certainly like to elicit as much awareness for family problems as Environmental Impact Statements have for problems in the physical environment. But we certainly ought *not* to set up a Family Impact Agency!"

Work of the Seminar to date includes an inventory of

the departments and programs within the federal government which affect families. The group has identified, in addition to Federal Reserve monetary policies and tax policies, more than two hundred domestic assistance programs. It has also found that government affects all families, not just poor ones. In support of this assertion, he mentioned military and foreign service transfers, Social Security's infamous "living in sin" provision, and what has come to be known as the anti-grandmother prohibition — no income tax deduction can be taken for child care provided by any relative closer than a cousin.

In trying to keep its eye fixed steadily on the family, as it looks at all these policies and programs, the Seminar has become aware of two factors which must be recognized before coming to what might otherwise be off-balance conclusions.

One: Different families, and often different members of the same family, may be affected differently by the same policy.

Two: Value judgments are inherent in any conclusions relating to the family. Since they cannot be eliminated, they should be recognized and named as such. There is no "Big Computer in the Sky" into which the data is fed and out of which correct answers emerge, Johnson said.

He also cautioned governments against premature implementation of Family Impact Statements. Pilot statements are now being prepared by the Seminar in three areas — government employment, foster care, and teen pregnancy. The family has its own ecology, which may be easily upset. Johnson cautioned that until the various effects public policies and programs have on various families and on individual family members has been thoroughly studied, any action to institute Family Impact Statements would be inappropriate.

Meanwhile, researchers and policy makers should work together to develop what he called "generic questions" and "consumer questions" to see whether or not they make sense. These questions should not be abstruse. Family Impact Analysis should be understandable to families themselves. In fact, he added, if necessary to drive this point home, perhaps the name itself should be changed to something with less of an academic ring.

He said that he was opposed, at this time, to the establishment of a separate "bureau of families" within the federal government and to the adoption of any national family policy. A national family policy would necessarily be vague, and its implications of uniform regimentation for families an uncomfortable idea. Instead he urged reassessment of a range of present policies, without the addition of a new bureaucracy.

He called the group's attention to the fact that no one knows as yet what the public's reaction to Family Impact Analysis is. The upcoming White House Conference on families will be a good way of drawing both public and Congressional attention to the matter and to assessing whether attitudes are positive or negative.

Concluding on this note, he shared the thoughts of an unnamed source whose message was: "Good motives provide no assurance of good consequences."

# Three Family Support Systems

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**“Even families living under minimal pressures need outside help at some point in time in order to function effectively. Law, medicine and education are three necessary adjuncts to the family in 20th century America.”**

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## Health

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**“Does the public expect too much from medicine? . . . What is ‘wellness behavior’? . . . Are parks as important as bread to achieving and maintaining good health?”**

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People expect far too much of medicine, and they want these expectations fulfilled at a reasonable cost. George Perpich, a state senator who sits on the Health, Welfare and Corrections Committee, opened the session by stating that “no one ever dies on those TV medical shows.” The media, he said, give the impression that with “just a little more research, just a few more spare parts, and we can all expect immortality.”

“But it’s time to look at things realistically, to stop expecting miracles and to start taking better care of ourselves. And the media,” he added, “could be a tremendous help in getting this message across to the public.”

Both Kathy Cavanaugh, a public health nurse from West Central Minnesota, and David Giese, special assistant to the commissioner of the state’s Health Department, agreed with Perpich’s advice.

According to Giese, the leading causes of premature death and disability have changed significantly in the United States during this century. Curative medicine did an effective job of bringing the leaders — pneumonia, influenza and tuberculosis — under control. However, cancer and chronic diseases with the heart and the cerebro-vascular system have replaced them as leaders, and these diseases do not seem to respond well to curative medicine alone. People have abdicated responsibility for their own health care, Giese said. It is essential now that they stop relying on medical techniques and technology to make and keep them healthy and start learning what he calls “wellness behavior.”

“Wellness behavior” is being aware of such things as proper diet, the dangers involved with using nicotine, alcohol and other drugs, the necessity for adequate rest, sleep, appropriate exercise, and of translating that awareness into behavior.

“Families play a major role in the learning of wellness behavior,” Giese stated. “Parents through their own attitudes and life-styles have a significant influence on the health behavior of their children.” He added that parental attitudes, however, frequently reflect society’s values, and society, at present, offers few rewards or incentives for staying well.

He suggested that public policy might help provide some by developing health education programs directed at the family, by revising health insurance to pay for preventive as well as curative medicine, by evaluating and monitoring the effects of advertising on family health, and by undertaking a campaign to make the public aware that its adoption of “wellness behavior” will contribute more to the health of the nation than will increased spending for further medical research.

“We take better care of our cars than we do of our own bodies,” Cavanaugh said. She went on to say that existing public policies are geared to health *problems*, that it would be more effective and less expensive, to invest resources in preventing the problems.

“What we’re saying to families, in effect, is that if they get into trouble, we’ll help, but don’t expect anything before that!”

She, too, sees parenting as being crucial in the promotion of family health. “Less time is spent on learning how to be a parent than on learning the skills necessary to a new hobby or other activity. No wonder we have problems!”

She is encouraged by the recently implemented Community Health Act in Minnesota, which gives state money to local governments to spend in health areas they deem most important in their individual cases. Such funds should be used, she thinks, in an attempt to break the chain which passes poor parenting and poor health habits on from generation to generation.

Mary Morris who directs the Catholic Center for the Separated and Divorced, discussed the intricate weaving of social, psychological, and economic factors into the maintenance of good health for the family. While the poor are often denied access to good food, good housing, recreation, and other aspects of life which promote good health, the affluent, who can afford these things, may be vulnerable to other factors equally damaging to health. One example might be the pressured executive who turns to alcohol to relieve pressures from work.

William Nye, Commissioner of the Department of Natural Resources, said he had no intention of following Marie Antoinette’s “let ‘em eat cake” policy by suggesting to the poor who ask for bread that they “go to the park.” Bread is vital, of course, but the state’s parks and recreational facilities are also important to the health of the state’s families.

Many programs exist which provide families with opportunities for healthful recreational activities, and there are many agencies to help families through health-related crises (e.g. alcoholism, accidents, sudden

death). But the major responsibility for health maintenance in the mid-20th Century falls on families themselves, and on those institutions in society which can educate them to assume those responsibilities effectively.

#### Four Recent Innovations in Family Health Care:

1. Family Practice: a new/old medical specialty.
2. Health Maintenance Organizations: pre-paid health care, which puts strong emphasis on preventive medicine.
3. Community University Health Center: serves primarily low-income children and youth in Minneapolis.
4. Teenage Medical Service (TAMS): offers comprehensive health care to adolescents in Minneapolis.

Harley Racer is a doctor who directs the Family Practice Residency Program, which is affiliated with the University of Minnesota. He said that since 1969, public policy in Minnesota has provided various incentives to support training in family practice. Until the present decade, preventive medicine has not been the primary concern of the medical community. Rather, the spotlight has been on coping with diseases which already existed. But because of the efforts of specialists and researchers, the load of the family physician has been lightened, and he has more time now to become the figure who "will nurture them, 'torture' them, and educate them."

Some questions which Racer believes should be addressed in light of the growth of family practice as a medical specialty: Will family practitioners be willing to work for what may be a lower income than other specialists receive? Will they move to the locations where they are most needed? Is the idea of the "family doctor" in these days of technological expertise really cost-effective? Should we support the development of new family practice programs as a way of supporting the changeover from curative to preventive emphasis in medicine? How should we allocate research dollars in the future, and how will the allocation affect family-centered medicine?

Loren Vorlicky is a pediatrician affiliated with the St. Louis Park Medical Center. He is a medical director of the Center's Health Plan, which is a Health Maintenance Organization. HMO's offer both out-patient care and in-hospital services.

Thirty years ago, according to Vorlicky, the health care system was like a cottage industry in many ways, with the family providing care in the home, under the guidance of a physician. Personal attributes of the physician ("bedside manner") were among his most important tools. But with the explosion after World War II of medical technology, the scene changed dramatically, and the costs rose, and are rising dramatically. On the other hand, many public services have also been dramatically improved — immunization, for example, and early screening. But the time has come to assemble the existing pieces, to bring some order to a system which has undergone such rapid and radical changes.

Health Maintenance Organizations attempt to do that, he said, and the number of people seeking their services is rising steadily. Seventy percent of the enrollees with the St. Louis Park Health Plan elect to have a family physician for primary health care, but the pre-

payment aspect of the program enables them to call on specialists when necessary and to use "extra services" in a systemized way.

Jean Smelker is a doctor who directs the Community University Health Center, a health service primarily for low-income children and youth which grew out of the Title V amendment to the federal government's Children and Youth program. Smelker maintains that the basic questions for public policy in the area of health care are "who gets what, when, how, and where, and who pays for it."

"There is an increasing awareness that spending more dollars for medical care does not necessarily buy more health," Smelker said. "With greater cognizance of how health beliefs influence health behavior and increasing interest in the individual assuming more responsibility for his own health care, we might well ask how our current health care system fits into the picture, if it fits at all."

She is concerned with the duplications of expensive programs and services, the frequent funding of new programs with frozen support of old and proven ones, and she cautions that the current emphasis on preventive care must be backed up with dollars, not just words.

Another question which will have increasing importance in the future is "Who shall live?" Smelker believes that this is a decision which should be made by policy makers, not by medical practitioners. Should more public funds be spent on organ transplants or on immunizations for children? It is an ethical, not a medical decision.

Our resources are finite, she said. There is a limit to what we can afford. Thus, it is essential that policy makers look at the whole picture, not just fragments of it, and make their decisions accordingly.

Thomas Berg is Clinic Administrator at the Teenage Medical Services in Minneapolis.

Berg stated that adolescents have special needs in the health care field which the Teenage Medical Service tries to fulfill; confidentiality of services, accessibility, low cost, and a different style of delivery, e.g. no uniforms, an attempt to see that the patient understands the nature of the diagnosis and treatment. The quality of care provided is high, he said, adding that revenues come primarily from public dollars — city, state and federal.

"The recent movement by some to ensure that parents have the ultimate authority to control health care services to their children is a destructive one in terms of adolescent health care delivery," he warned. "This movement will only compound the feelings of fright and despair that young people must face with issues of unwanted pregnancy, venereal disease and others associated with long term effects of poor health life-styles."

## Education

**ed-u-cate (ej 00-kat), v.t. L *educatus*, pp. of *educare*, to bring up, rear or train . . .**

— Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language

**"The direction in which education starts a man will determine his future life." — Plato in *The Republic***

Nowadays, the word "education" can call to mind such things as teacher contract negotiations, why Johnny and Jill can or cannot read, declining enrollments, unused school buildings. In such discussions, what is often forgotten? The fact that education is necessarily a joint venture between family and school! Neither institution can blame the other for poor results or evade its responsibility for educating a child.

Four sessions during this Conference were devoted to the inter-action between family and school, and how public policy might facilitate this interaction.

### **Family Participation in Education**

Schools and parents may not know that they need each other at this point in time, but they do — not only as co-educators but also as political allies, Ken Nelson, a member of Minnesota's House Education Committee declared.

Commissioner of Education, Howard Casmey, explained that during the 1960's there was a split between home and school. But schools found out they cannot possibly do the job of educating alone. They need the help of the family to motivate, innovate and monitor. Without that help, education's best efforts are often to no avail. He believes, for example, that parent conferences should be scheduled with the family's convenience in mind, not just during the working day.

"For too long, parents have been seen as isolated entities, separate from the learning process. We must establish now a working partnership in the educational enterprise." He cited California's Early Childhood Education program, which was begun in 1973, as an example of what he has in mind: parent participation in program planning as well as in classroom activities.

Dennis DeMers, president of the Head Start Directors Association, said that the cognitive dimension of education is only one of four aspects that has made Head Start's program successful. Three other emphases include awareness of health, social and nutritional needs. He said that schools seldom have the impact on a child that a family or peer group does, and that schools can expect only limited success without the participation of families.

Judy Farmer described the Marcy Open School in Minneapolis and some of the successes and failures it has experienced in a program which has the parents and the children all working together to create a stimulating learning environment.

Finally, Jo Malmsten suggested that becoming active in the Parent Teacher Association is an effective way for parents to participate in the educational process.

She said it may take years to erase the image of the Harper Valley P.T.A. from the minds of many, but that the organization is undergoing needed attitude changes and becoming an influential voice in school affairs.

"Some administrators still fear parents," she added, "and some parents still fear that school authorities will make it difficult for their children should they question policies." But she believes that reciprocal communication is required for a healthy atmosphere to prevail.

### **Family and Early Childhood Education**

Another title for this session, according to Jerome Hughes, chairman of the Minnesota Senate's Education Committee, might well be "Preventive Education," since that is the main idea behind efforts to improve parenting skills and disseminate knowledge about the needs and behavior of pre-school children.

"Parents are the most important teachers of their children," Hughes said. He pointed out that by the time a child is in sixth grade, he has spent only 7% of his time in school.

"And yet," Hughes continued, "in developing our present school system, we have indirectly conveyed the notion that the school is the only place where education can occur."

Studies have shown, he said, that the first five years of a child's life are the critical ones. Thus, it is of vital importance, both to children and to society, that more emphasis be put on these crucial years.

To date, public policy in Minnesota has resulted in two major efforts in "preventive education." First, programs in Family Life and Early Childhood Education have been established in some of the school districts throughout the state. Any family with pre-school children living in that district may participate in the program. Second, Adult Vocational Schools offer a wide variety of parenting classes, where the emphasis is on communication skills and child development.

In order to be really effective, however, panelist Tuttle Sherlock, Director of Olmstead County Council for Coordinated Child Care, believes that public policy must become aware of its shortcomings vis a vis the family with pre-school children. Too often, local communities do not take "preventive education" very seriously and fail to back it with appropriate support. She mentioned also that a family under extreme financial stress will not benefit from any form of family life education.

### **School Support Services for Students and Families**

It is well known, said Von Valletta, Deputy Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Education, that the prerequisites to good school performance are good physical and mental health. Yet the school nurse, psychologist, social worker, counselor are often regarded as unnecessary "frills", their services as peripheral or tangential to the real business of education. With declining enrollments, with fewer dollars to spend on education, it is these services which are usually cut first. She believes that this is a mistake, that these services are an essential and integral part of the teaching/learning process.

"The lack of public policy in social service areas is



serious," she said. The only public policies at present are these: that counseling services be available in secondary schools, and that the same amount of money for health services be available to both public and non-public schools.

"A reasonable policy would be one that does not mandate anything for any particular system," she said, adding that the importance of social services and the availability of trained personnel to do those jobs should be brought to the attention of local boards throughout the state, that efforts be made to dispel the myth that social services in the schools are a waste of money.

Terri Barreiro works for the organization Enablers, which serves the seven-county metro area by attempting to identify the needs and concerns of the schoolage population and to find ways to answer them. All these needs relate directly to learning how to be an adequate adult, and help in meeting the needs is vital to successful maturation.

Barreiro suggests that the four hundred agencies in the Metro area, half of whose services go to young people, might well join with the public school system to help fill those needs which are not now being met by that system.

Jan Morgan, a high school counselor, confirmed the importance of social services in the schools and the inadequate job they are being forced to do because of financial limitations and sometimes lack of cooperation from other adults in the child's environment.

"The counselor is the link between services, the referral person, and as such should work not just with the student but with other appropriate people and institutions who may be able to help in meeting the student's basic needs."

#### Use of School Facilities for Family and Community Programming

As enrollments decline, it will become necessary for many schools to close, but as Michael Hickey, superintendent of the St. Louis Park schools, sees it: "Closed schools can and should mean open doors."

Hickey believes that public schools are paid for with the public dollar and ought to serve the public. In St. Louis Park, he said, there are 18,000 households; 80% of these households have no children attending public schools. It is his belief that these families, who have also paid for the schools, should have some use from them.

A school's facilities can be (and traditionally have been) made available for public use, usually to non-profit organizations at no fee or a nominal one. But Hickey sees further uses of school facilities which are diametrically opposed to "mothballing" of unneeded buildings.

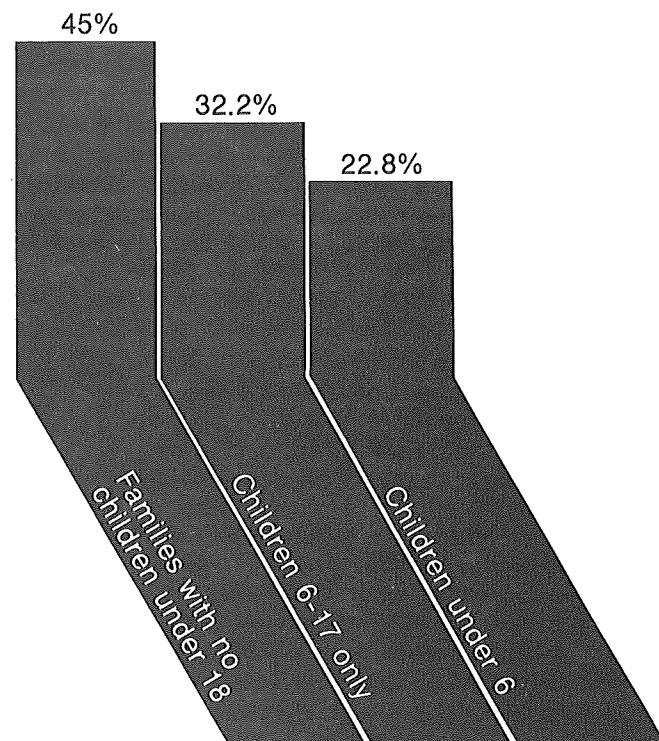
St. Louis Park, he reported, has closed three schools. Yet all three school facilities are operating full-time at nearly 100% of capacity. He listed six possible ways such buildings might be used:

1. The traditional way mentioned above.
2. Adult Education programs.
3. Social and welfare services, such as outreach efforts and immunization clinics.
4. Family services. Here the possibilities are many: chemical dependency programs, training classes for day care providers, pre-schools, classes in creative play.
5. Cultural and recreational activities.
6. Space-leasing to non-profit corporations.

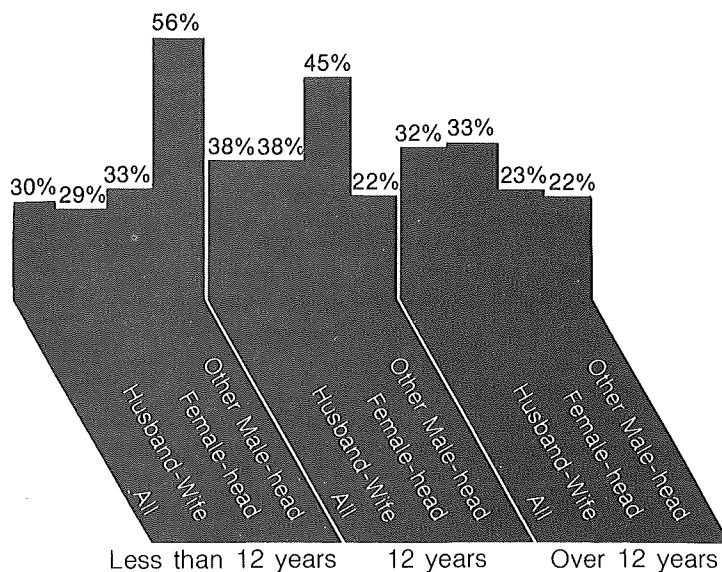
There is a need for legislation to enable school districts to explore the possibilities of use of soon-to-be vacated buildings. He urged that we not be as short-sighted in destroying or "mothballing" these excess buildings.

#### Families by presence and age of children, 1977.

(Over half of all families have children under 18)



#### Educational attainment by family heads, 1977.



**“A society imperils its own future when out of negligence or contempt it overlooks the needs of children to be reared in a family — their own family or another one — in which they will be given a sense of absolute belonging.”** — Rosalie Wahl

Community resources should be offered to protect families before their problems make it necessary for them to enter the judicial system. This was a theme which ran through Supreme Court Justice Rosalie Wahl's entire presentation. Laws are created to handle situations after problems have become overwhelming, she said. Juvenile courts and commitment proceedings for mental illness are two examples where the judicial system becomes the last recourse for problems, which if they had been recognized and handled earlier, might not have become acute.

Juvenile courts were started with high hopes by the “child savers”, Wahl said. They were supposed to nip juvenile problems in the bud and to rescue juveniles from undesirable living conditions. Traditionally, they have jurisdiction over a wide spectrum of problems which involve delinquency, neglect, and dependency. Designed to help “children in trouble”, they also provide help for parents and schools “in trouble” by enforcing incorrigibility and truancy laws when violators are brought to their attention.

But over the years, these courts have acquired a bad reputation, she said, partly because they have become catch-alls for unsolved problems. At present, they serve a rather small sample of troubled youth — usually the poor and those ethnic minorities whose life-styles seem to conflict with white middle class standards.

“We must be constantly aware of our quiet middle class tendencies to equate adequate child care and protection with our own values and standards. My comfortable household chaos may be your neglect,” she said.

Whether the child comes to the attention of the court in the first place is often decided by varying community and parental attitudes toward the child's behavior. The more affluent among troubled youth usually do not enter the system, since their parents are more often able to afford private treatment. But the poor must have a child adjudicated delinquent or dependent in order to get financial help for treatment the child may need.

Parental neglect petitions are also predominantly the province of the poor and ethnic minorities.

“The decision to bring a neglect case or not to bring it often depends on the neglect threshold of the individual social worker,” Wahl declared, and went on to wonder if it is better for a child to be placed in a foster home or to live with its natural mother whose marital arrangements may be somewhat irregular.

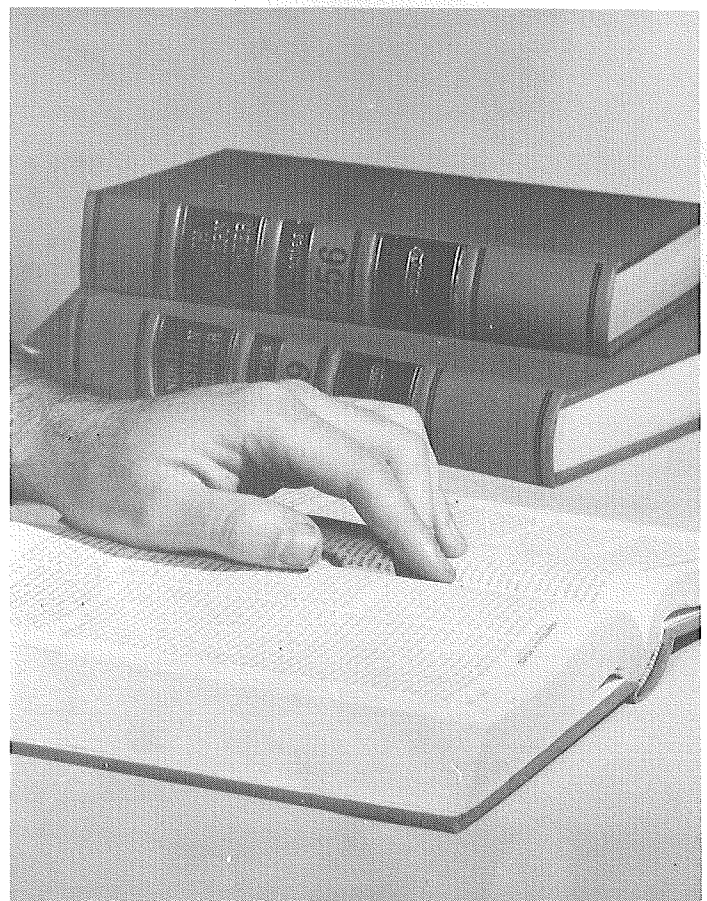
The Juvenile court must also decide when termination of parental rights is indicated, she explained, adding that this is often a difficult and heart-rending decision to make.

Commitment to a mental institution is another area where individual behavior and the norms of society must be examined closely. She believes that if help were given to both the individual and the family at the first onslaught of the illness, institutionalization might be avoided, and the family might never have occasion to call on the judicial system for help.

“How can we make human services available in the community so that families and individuals may feel free to use them and maintain their dignity and pride and self respect in doing so?” she asked.

Not only must these services be made available, but also children must learn to trust other human beings, to feel free to ask for help when they need it. Then if other human beings are there to meet the need and to merit the trust, many problems which wind up in court might be solved before that destination is reached.

And make no mistake about it, she said: “It is not pleasant to be dragged through the courts. And it is expensive. So let's invest instead in preventing situations which take families and family members into court.”



# Conclusions

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**“There is no government solution for all the problems families are experiencing, but if we can . . . remedy some of the anti-family policies that exist, the need for many government programs will shrink. Indeed, the key to putting government in its place is to restore families to their rightful place as the cornerstone of national well being.” —**

Joseph Califano

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Following this conference, Governor Perpich appointed a fifteen member Task Force on Families to study not only how the issues identified at the Conference should be dealt with but also to examine how existing public policy on both state and local levels affect Minnesota families in general. It began its work in May, 1978, and is expected to come up with recommendations for legislative and/or executive action by November, 1978.

Task Force members were selected to represent as nearly as possible the whole spectrum of family styles and ethnic groups in Minnesota. Made up of seven men and eight women, their ages range from twenty-four to seventy-four, and they come from both the Metro area and other parts of the state. One member is widowed; another is divorced; two are “single parents”; one is single with a large number of brothers and sisters; a majority of the group live in “husband-wife” households, with two or more children. Although most are laypeople as far as “family studies” are concerned, all have been active in their respective communities in areas which concern the family.

The group meets once a month to listen to professionals in government, business, education, and social services, and to discuss what it has heard. In addition, a series of “roundtable discussions” are held monthly in various locations throughout the state. The public is invited to these sessions and urged to express opinions and offer experiences relevant to the matters under discussion.

The Task Force is working from the premise that it is not government’s role to interfere with or intrude into family life, but that government can and should play a positive role in supporting its citizens in their efforts to achieve and maintain a strong family life.

President Carter, in a 1976 campaign speech in New Hampshire said: “There can be no more urgent priority for the next administration than to see that every decision our government makes is designed to honor and support and strengthen the American family.”

His administration is now that “next administration”, and the promise remains to be fulfilled. The president has scheduled a White House Conference on Families, for which the proceedings of this Minnesota Conference will be a valuable resource.

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Tapes of the proceedings of this conference are available from:

**Child Care Information Center  
532 Settlers Landing Road  
Post Office Box 548  
Hampton, Virginia 23669**

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# Appendix

## 1. Conference Speakers

- Fred Aden, Supervisor, Interagency Services Unit, Minnesota Department of Economic Security
- Robert Aitkin, Director, Social Services, Minnesota Chippewa Tribe
- Judith Anderson, Editorial Consultant, North American Council on Adoptable Children
- Nancy Anderson, Hubert Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota
- Lindsay G. Arthur, Judge of the District Court, Fourth Judicial District/Juvenile Division
- Ava Baciak, Consumer
- Carolyn Bailey, Sergeant Investigator, St. Paul Police Department
- Lurline Baker, Single Parent; Job Development Specialist, Arrowhead Regional Corrections
- Terri Barreiro, Executive Director, Enablers
- Heather Baum, Director, Minnesota Recipients Alliance
- Thomas S. Berg, Clinic Administrator, Teen Age Medical Services
- Linda Berglin, State Representative; Chairperson, Council on the Economic Status of Women
- Leonard Boche, Administrator, Union City Mission, Inc.; Past President, Alcohol and Drug Problems Association of North America
- LeRoy Brown, Director, Education Department, Minnesota Catholic Conference
- Terri Carnes, Chemical Dependency Counselor, Family Services of St. Paul
- Howard Casmey, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education
- Kathy Cavanaugh, Community Health Services Administrator, Countryside Public Health Services
- Gerald W. Christenson, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Finance
- Christopher B. Cohen, Principal Regional Official, HEW-Chicago; Representative White House Conference on Families
- Henry Green Crow, Native American Planner, St. Paul Native American Multi-Services Center
- Robert Currie, Assistant Director, State Employee's Union
- Eunice Davis, Director, Child Development Section, St. Paul-Ramsey Hospital; Chairperson, Minnesota Governor's Planning Council on Developmental Disabilities
- Dennis DeMers, President, Minnesota Association of Head Start Directors
- John Demos, Professor of History, Brandeis University; on leave at Charles Warren Center for Studies in American History, Harvard University, Boston, Massachusetts
- Edward J. Dirkswager, Jr., Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Public Welfare
- Thomas G. Doran, Senior Vice President, Twin City Federal Savings & Loan Association
- Nicholas Eltgroth, Director of Marriage Preparation, Education for Marriage, Inc.
- Judy Farmer, Parent; Resource Coordinator, Marcy Open School
- Zetta Feder, Foster Care Consultant, Social Services Division, Minnesota Department of Public Welfare
- Ellen Z. Fifer, M.D., Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Health
- Evy Fischlowitz, Board Member, Minnesota Association for Children with Learning Disabilities
- James Franczyk, Human Resources Planner, Minnesota State Planning Agency
- David Giese, Special Assistant to the Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Health
- Marge Goldberg, Parent of a Handicapped Child; Chairperson, Minnesota Committee on the Handicapped
- Joe Graba, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education
- Kathy Gustafson, State Demographer's Office, Minnesota State Planning Agency
- Sue Harrington, President, Minnesota Children's Lobby; Training Coordinator, Greater Minneapolis Day Care Association
- Clarence E. Harris, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Personnel
- Gary Haselhuhn, Director, Social Services Division, Minnesota Department of Public Welfare
- Diane Hedin, Assistant Director, Center for Youth Development and Research, University of Minnesota
- Michael Hickey, Superintendent, St. Louis Park School District 283
- Janice Hogan, Associate Professor, Department of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota
- Michael Hopp, Flexible Work Hours Coordinator, Control Data Corporation
- Bernadette Hughes, Parent of Two Physically Handicapped Children
- Jerome Hughes, State Senator; Chairperson, Senate Education Committee

**Sidney Johnson**, Director, Family Impact Seminar, The George Washington University, Washington, D.C.

**William Kelly**, State Representative; Chairperson, House Taxes Committee

**Ronald Laliberte**, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education; Chairperson, Columbia Heights School Board

**Robert Leik**, Director, Minnesota Family Study Center, University of Minnesota

**Lou Lopez**, Director, Neighborhood Action, Ramsey Action Program

**Pat Mack**, Assistant Commissioner for Juvenile Programs, Minnesota Department of Corrections

**B.J. Mahling**, Chairperson, Council on Quality Education

**Shawn Mahoney**, Student, Cannon Falls

**Jo Malmsten**, Legislative Chairperson, Minnesota Parent-Teacher-Student Association

**Tom Mangan**, State Representative, Coon Rapids

**William Mathews**, Director, Community Services, Mahtomedi School District 832

**Loring McAllister**, Ph.D., Dakota County Mental Health Center

**Dorothy McClung**, Research Attorney, Minnesota Department of Revenue

**William McCutcheon**, State Senator; Chairperson, Senate Taxes and Tax Laws Committee

**Jan Morgan**, Counselor, South St. Paul High School

**Mary Morris**, Director, Catholic Center for the Separated and Divorced

**Marlene Munig**, Health Coordinator, Northwest Adult Day Care Project, Inc.

**Ken Nelson**, State Representative; Member, House Education Committee

**William Nye**, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

**Kathleen O'Brien**, Research Associate, Historic Resources Survey, Minnesota Historical Society

**Michael O'Donnell**, Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Economic Security

**Mary Alice Pappas**, Single Parent and Child Care User

**Ellen Pence**, Director, Battered Women's Program, Minnesota Department of Corrections

**George F. Perpich**, State Senator; Chairperson, Senate Health, Welfare, and Corrections Committee; Dentist

**The Honorable Rudy Perpich**, Governor, State of Minnesota

**Marilyn Peterson**, Director, Professional Services, Family Services of St. Paul

**Michael Pierce**, Single Parent with custody of 3- & 5-year-old children; Lithographer

**Harley Racer, M.D.**, Acting Unit Director, Methodist-University Family Practice Residence Program; Associate Professor, Department of Family Practice and Community Health, University of Minnesota Medical School

**Richard Ramberg**, Assistant Director, Minnesota Council on the Handicapped

**Betty Jean Recknor**, Family Day Care Provider; Former Elementary Teacher

**Ronald Reed**, Executive Director, Family Service of St. Paul

**Hazel Reinhardt**, State Demographer, Minnesota State Planning Agency

**Nina Rothchild**, Executive Director, Council on the Economic Status of Women

**Kenneth Rudkin**, Director, Education for Marriage

**Kathy Sears**, Parent

**Gretchen S. Shafer**, Coordinator, Ramsey County Child Abuse Team

**Tutti Sherlock**, Executive Director, Olmsted County Council for Coordinated Child Care

**Jean Smelker, M.D.**, Director, Community University Health Care Center; Member, Metropolitan Health Board

**Lou Smerling**, President, National Association of State Boards of Education

**James Solem**, Executive Director, Minnesota Housing Finance Agency

**Patt Springhorn**, Parent Education Director, Minnesota Correctional Institution for Women

**Emily Anne Staples**, State Senator, Wayzata

**Ellen J. Stekert**, State Folklorist; Director, Minnesota Folklife Center; Professor of English, University of Minnesota

**John Taborn**, Department of Afro-American Studies, University of Minnesota

**Adolph Tobler**, President, Metropolitan Senior Federation

**Von Valletta**, Deputy Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Education

**Peter Vanderpoel**, Director, Minnesota State Planning Agency

**Dick Vanwagner**, Assistant to the Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Economic Security

**Sharon Vaughn**, Co-coordinator/Advocate, Harriet Tubman Women's Shelter

**Loren Vorlicky, M.D.**, Pediatrician, St. Louis Park Medical Center

**Rosalie Wahl**, Associate Justice, Minnesota Supreme Court

**Esther Wattenberg**, Associate Professor, School of Social Work; Staff, Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota



Gayle Whitesell, Co-chairperson, Governor's Advisory Council on Community Education; State Legislative Chairperson, Minnesota Medical Association Auxiliary

T. Williams, Ombudsman, Minnesota Department of Corrections

Terence Williams, Supervisor, Family Center, Hazelden Foundation

Steve Wrbanich, Executive Director, National Paraplegic Foundation, North County Chapter

Ken Young, Hennepin County Court Services

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## 2. Planning Committee

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James Franczyk, Human Resources Planner, Minnesota State Planning Agency

Beverly Gleeson, Director, State Economic Opportunity Office, Minnesota Department of Economic Security

Grace Gumnit, Acting Director, Division of Personal Health Services, Minnesota Department of Health

Gary Haselhuhn, Department of Public Welfare

Janice Hogan, Associate Professor, Department of Family Social Science, University of Minnesota

Ruth Jewson, Executive Director, National Council on Family Relations, Minneapolis

Eugene Kairies, Coordinator, Minnesota Council on Quality Education, Division of Planning and Development, Minnesota Department of Education

John Kingrey, Office of the Governor

Robert Leik, Professor and Director, Minnesota Family Study Center, University of Minnesota

Dorothy McClung, Research Attorney, Minnesota Department of Revenue

Pat D. Mack, Assistant Commissioner, Minnesota Department of Corrections

Bud Philbrook, Assistant Commissioner for Administrative Services, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources

Ronald Reed, Executive Director, Family Services of St. Paul

Hazel Reinhardt, State Demographer, Minnesota State Planning Agency

Nina Rothchild, Executive Director, Council on the Economic Status of Women

Peter Vanderpoel, Director, Minnesota State Planning Agency

Michael Weber, Assistant Commissioner, Bureau of Community Services, Minnesota Department of Public Welfare

Shirley Zimmerman, Assistant Professor and Assistant Director, Continuing Education in Social Work; Post-Doctoral Associate, Family Impact Analysis Training Program, Family Study Center, University of Minnesota

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## 3. Conference Staff

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James Franczyk, State Planning Agency

Nina Rothchild, Council on the Economic Status of Women

Beth Sandell, State Planning Agency

Vickie DeSanto, Continuing Education in Social Work, University of Minnesota

Shirley Zimmerman, Continuing Education in Social Work, University of Minnesota

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## 4. Funding Sources

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### State Funding Sources

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Department of Education  
Department of Economic Security  
Department of Public Welfare  
Department of Revenue  
State Planning Agency  
Council on the Economic Status of Women

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### Private Funding Sources

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Dayton Hudson Foundation, Minneapolis, MN  
General Mills Foundation, Minneapolis, MN  
Minneapolis Star & Tribune, Minneapolis, MN  
Northwest Area Foundation, St. Paul, MN

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## 5. Exhibitors

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CTC Project  
Hopkins Schools  
20460 Western Road  
Excelsior, MN 55331

Education for Marriage  
501 South Pokegama  
Grand Rapids, MN 55744

Enablers, Inc.  
104 West Franklin  
Minneapolis, MN 55404

Family Renewal Center  
6515 Barrie Road  
Edina, MN 55435

Family Services of Greater St. Paul Area  
355 Washington  
St. Paul, MN 55101

General Mills, Co.  
P.O. Box 1113  
Minneapolis, MN 55440

Hennepin County Community Services Department  
300 South Sixth Street  
Minneapolis, MN 55487

Minnesota Citizens Concerned for Life  
5609 Harriet Avenue South  
Minneapolis, MN 55419

Minnesota Council on Quality Education  
Minnesota Dept. of Education  
721 Capitol Square Building  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Minnesota Head Start Directors Association  
Minnesota Dept. of Economic Security  
Office of Economic Opportunity  
Room 690  
160 East Kellogg Blvd.  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Minnesota Parenting Collaborative  
c/o Audrey Grote, Supervisor for Secondary Vocational  
Programs  
Minnesota Dept. of Education  
550 Cedar Street  
St. Paul, MN 55101