



League of Women Voters of Minnesota Records

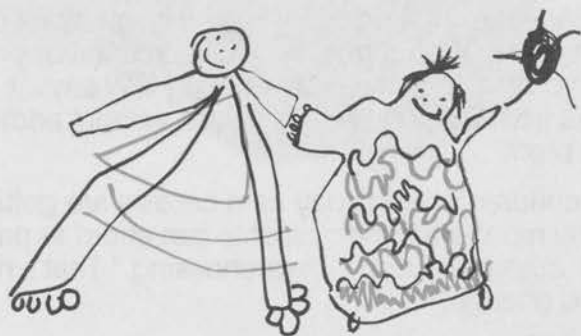
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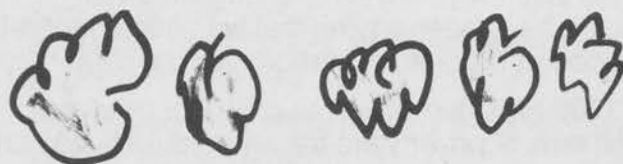
You can help our country get a national program of comprehensive day care.

- ✓ You can scotch myths and half truths wherever you hear them.
- ✓ You can make clear that a comprehensive day care program would serve all sorts of families, not just the poor.
- ✓ You can tell your political leaders loud and often that you need and want quality day care.
- ✓ You can speak realistically about the costs of having such a program—and of not having one.
- ✓ You can work with others to foster both community education and action.
- ✓ You can get in touch with the League nearest to you.



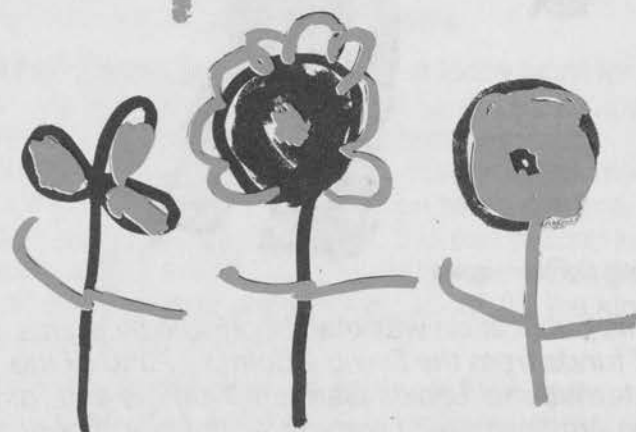
ORDER FROM

League of Women Voters of the United States
1730 M Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20036
Pub. No. 281 35¢ a copy 50/ \$3.50 



DAY CARE

who needs it?



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS



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memorandum

League of Women Voters Education Fund

July 27, 1973

TO: All State and Local League Presidents
 FROM: Martha Greenawalt, HR Chairman
 SUBJECT: Day Care Publication - Day Care - Who Needs It?

Attached is a copy of our new day care publication. As you can see we haven't relied on words alone, but have included art work by preschoolers so that they may speak for themselves. A gift to the Education Fund has made this unusual publication possible.

We think Day Care - Who Needs It? is an exciting pamphlet which will help dispel some of the myths that have grown up during recent years around proposals for a national day care program.

We think you will find it a useful tool in educating people about day care programs. You will want to distribute copies to the media: local newspapers, TV and radio. There must also be numbers of organizations in your state or community that would have an interest in meeting the community's day care needs: church and educational groups, labor unions, women's groups, major employers in your community, the Welfare Rights Organization, CAP agencies, men's clubs, civic organizations. Will you see that they receive a sample copy and are urged to order it for wide distribution. Note that we have set prices on the pamphlet to encourage buying in quantity. ORDER NOW!

League of Women Voters Education Fund
 1730 M Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036

35¢ a copy 50/\$3.50

Please send _____ copies of DAY CARE-WHO NEEDS IT? (Pub. No. 218)

SHIP TO: (League) _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

WOMEN & WORK

The day-care dilemma

APR 20 1978

Women are entering the labor force in increasing numbers, out of necessity as well as choice. Between 1950 and 1976, the number of women working outside the home doubled. In 1976, 5.6 million women with children under six were in the labor force, and almost one in five of these was divorced, separated, widowed or single. Even women with very young children are working outside the home—fully one-third of women with children under three were in the labor force in 1976. Moreover, these trends are expected to continue in the coming decade.

For millions of families, a second income is required to maintain an adequate standard of living. In 1974, 5.3 million working women were married to men earning less than \$7,000 annually. In the same year, 4.5 million families with incomes over \$10,000 depended on the wife's wages to keep their income above the poverty line; and over 60% of the 20 million families with incomes over \$15,000 contained two working parents.

For an increasing number of families, the mother's income is the only source of support. The number of children living in families headed by women more than doubled between 1960 and 1974, and almost half of the 2.1 million single mothers with children under six now work outside the home.

Who's minding the children?

For many working women, the most persistent problem they face is finding adequate child-care arrangements for their young children. Many use **in-home care**, where neighbors, relatives or babysitters provide care in the child's own home. Or **neighbors** or **relatives** may care for the child informally in their homes. Other parents use what day-care specialists classify as **family day care**, where one caregiver is paid to care for several children in her own home. Another option is **preschools** or **nursery schools**, although these programs are usually part time and therefore do not meet the needs of parents who work full time. Still other parents use **day-care centers** (which may be run by public agencies, private nonprofit organizations or for-profit providers) that provide full-day services.

The number of for-profit or proprietary centers has grown dramatically in recent years. Chains of for-profit centers, located primarily in states with minimal licensing standards or enforcement policies, have been established to meet the growing demand for center care. Some **before- and after-school day care** is available for school-age children, but this type of care is generally hardest to obtain.

Recent studies confirm what casual observation suggests: most children being cared for while parents work are in informal arrangements, either in their own home or in the home of a neighbor or relative. According to a 1975 survey conducted for HEW's Office of Child Development, informal care is the most common arrangement for children being cared for full time (over 30 hours a week). About 2.4 million children were in informal out-of-home arrangements—about half cared for by relatives, half by nonrelatives. About 1.5 million children were cared for at home, either by relatives or nonrelatives. About 1 million children in full-time care were in day-care centers or nursery schools. Thousands of other preschool children stay home alone while parents are at work,

although no reliable estimates exist on the number of children in this makeshift arrangement.

Proponents of increased federal support for day-care services see in these statistics a serious unmet need for day care, pointing to the fact that only 1.6 million licensed day-care slots are available for the 6.5 million children under six with working mothers. Opponents of an expanded federal role hotly contest that conclusion, arguing that existing day-care services are adequate. One recent study by Meredith Larson, entitled *Federal Policy for Pre-School Services: Assumptions and Evidence*, argues that the high percentage of families using in-home care or family day care indicates that parents prefer these arrangements over center care. But this analysis ignores two key facts: that for many working parents, center care is prohibitively expensive and that in many areas center care is unavailable at any cost.

A recent survey commissioned by HEW found that about one in four parents would prefer a form of day care different from the type they are using. Over half of these parents preferred day-care centers or nursery schools over current arrangements; 30% preferred care in the child's own home; only 16% favored family day care.

Who pays?

Day care is currently financed from a variety of sources, including federal, state and local governments, charitable organizations and parents themselves. In a few instances, employers or unions provide day care as a fringe benefit.

Parents spent a total of \$7 billion on day care in 1977, including intermittent babysitting. According to the National Child Care Consumer Study, the average cost of full-time care in a day-care center ranges from about \$105 to \$175 a month. The average cost for full-time family day care ranges between \$95 and \$132 a month. When parents pay for in-home care, the average monthly fee is about \$65. In most cases, when children are cared for by relatives, no fee is charged. The average weekly expenditure for families in which the mother was employed full time was \$23.

Federal support of day care—some \$2 billion in FY 1977—is provided through various programs designed to serve a variety of purposes. The largest portion, \$650 million, was spent through **Title XX**, the HEW social services program providing federal funds to match state expenditures for a wide range of social services. Because day care is an expensive service, states, which determine eligibility, generally set income cutoffs low, averaging half of state median income in many states.

The second largest "expenditure"—\$475 million in FY 1977—was actually not an outlay of money but tax revenue lost to the federal government via the **day-care tax credit**. It allows families with two working parents, single parents and some students to subtract 20% of day-care costs (up to \$400 for one child and \$800 for two or more) from federal tax owed.

In FY 1977, about \$475 million was spent for **Headstart**, which provides part-time or full-time year-round care to 349,000 children, mostly from low-income families—about 20% of eligible

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LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MINNESOTA

555 WABASHA • ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA 55102 • TELEPHONE (612) 224-5445

March 22, 1979

The Honorable Joseph T. Niehaus, Chairman
Committee on Health and Welfare
319 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Mr. Niehaus:

The League of Women Voters of Minnesota supports passage of H.F. 272 which sets forth a sliding fee schedule payment plan for child care services. The League has a national position of support for day care centers for disadvantaged pre-school children in order to give parents the opportunity for employment. We also have a position of support for income assistance which requires that supportive services should be available - but not compulsory - for participants in income assistance programs. This position specifies that fees for these supportive services should be based on ability to pay.

According to a recent study, in many families of low to lower-middle incomes, a parent is unable to work because he or she can not find adequate child care services at a price the family can afford. Sometimes it may be easier for such a family to choose AFDC over employment. Consistent with the League positions described, we believe H.F. 272 would allow a parent to accept employment and raises in pay without fear of a net loss in income because of the loss of child care assistance payments.

We urge your support.

Sincerely,

Helene Borg
President

Jean Tews
Human Resources Chair

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Same letter sent to each member of the Committee on Health and Welfare