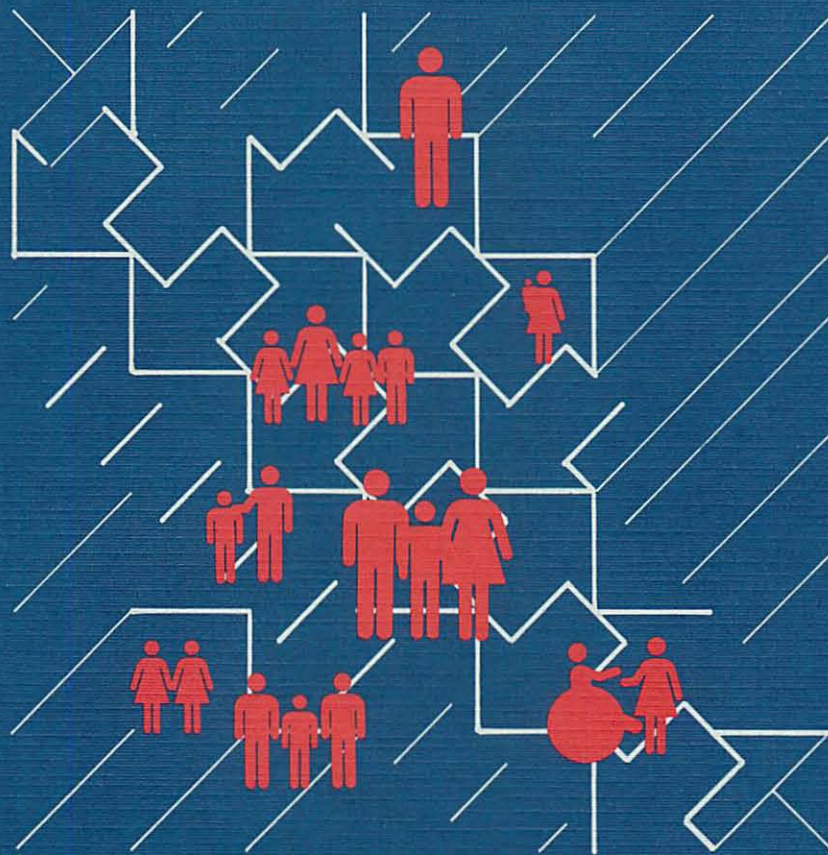


Task Force on Family Diversity

City of Los Angeles



Transcript of Public Hearings

January 28, 1987

February 19, 1987

March 16, 1987

April 8, 1987

Councilman Michael Woo
Convenor

Thomas F. Coleman
Special Consultant

Christopher McCauley
Nora Baladerian
Co-Chairpersons



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TASK FORCE ON FAMILY DIVERSITY

Mandate

WHEREAS, the family, as an institution, has played and continues to play an important role in the development of our city, state, and nation; and

WHEREAS, "family" is a broad and expansive concept, capable of encompassing a wide range of committed relationships; and

WHEREAS, most individuals, in furtherance of their inalienable rights to life, liberty, privacy, and pursuit of happiness, have formed and continue to form family relationships; and

WHEREAS, our city is rich in family diversity; and

WHEREAS, government should encourage the formation and development of family relationships; and

WHEREAS, government itself should not foster discrimination against families, nor should it tolerate unfair private discrimination against families; and

WHEREAS, in furtherance of our commitment to family life and individual freedom, the City of Los Angeles and its affiliated political entities should adopt reasonable measures to address the legitimate needs of families; and

WHEREAS, government authority to remedy family problems is vested in various levels and branches of government;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Los Angeles City Councilman Michael Woo, by virtue of the power vested in me as a member of the Los Angeles City Council and as Chairman of the City Council's Intergovernmental Relations Committee, do hereby convene a TASK FORCE ON FAMILY DIVERSITY:

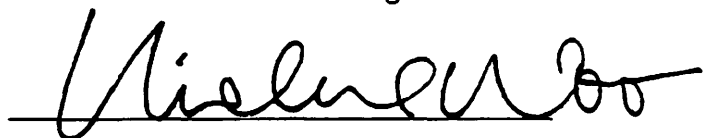
1. Said Task Force shall consist of two co-chairs and up to 38 other members appointed by me.

2. The co-chairs and members shall serve without compensation.

3. The Task Force shall study the nature and extent of family diversity in the City of Los Angeles and shall investigate any evident problems experienced by variable family groups, such as single-parent families, foster families, unmarried couples, gay or lesbian couples, or families with senior or disabled members.

4. The Task Force shall issue a final report approximately by June, 1987, documenting its findings, noting demographic and legal trends, and making recommendations for legislative, administrative, educational, or other appropriate actions which should be undertaken within the public or private sectors to address the special problems of families in Los Angeles.

Dated: April 9, 1986


COUNCILMAN MICHAEL WOO

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(Revised March 16, 1987)

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By publishing this transcript or by underwriting the costs of the hearings, neither the Task Force nor its fiscal sponsors are indicating approval or disapproval of the remarks or recommendations contained in the testimony of the presenters.

The publication of this transcript is intended to be an educational venture designed to enlighten the community and its leaders about the many pressing issues affecting contemporary families in Los Angeles.

The Task Force will adopt a position on many of these issues in a final report which is scheduled for publication in November 1987.

Transcript Production

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* * *

Note: The testimony has been edited appropriately for the transition from audio to print media.

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PUBLIC HEARING: January 28, 1987

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY

Task Force Co-Chair

Opening Remarks

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: My name is Christopher McCauley and I'm the Co-Chair of the Los Angeles City Task Force on Family Diversity. This afternoon is a regular open meeting of the Task Force. Today, we have a special series of presentations of invited expert witnesses.

We are engaged in an 18-month program. The Task Force was created by Councilman Michael Woo in May of 1986 for the express purpose of exploring, documenting and making recommendations about the changing conditions of the contemporary family in Los Angeles. The assumption that we are working on is that there may be a number of areas in public life, in public policy, that are not in sync with the way that millions of people live in our city. These new and changing and diverse family forms have not been thoroughly documented and it is one of our hopes that our deliberations during this year will yield a report that will be helpful to make policy recommendations and changes to the City Council.

Members of the Task Force come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences and they reside in various parts of the city so there is a diversity of people involved in this 38-member Task Force. Most Task Force members are part of two-person research teams.

Conceptually, we have divided our project into several phases. We completed our organizational phase last summer. Our initial research phase was conducted last fall when we were assisted by law students from the University of Southern California Law School, sociology students from California State University at Northridge, and psychology students from the California School of Professional Psychology. The third phase, our public hearings, we begin today. Over the next four months we will hear from distinguished members of the community who will share their ideas about various topics related to family diversity.

With that, I'd like to move to our first presenter. Jay Kohorn is an attorney who is with us in the capacity of Report Consultant.

JAY KOHORN

Report Consultant

Studying the Family

JAY KOHORN: As a member of the staff, so to speak, I would like to clarify that I am a presenter and not an official witness. I also would like to extend my welcome to all of you and tell you that this is the first of four public hearings to take place in Los Angeles on this subject. Public hearings will result in evidence which will be used ultimately in a report which will be filed with the City Council later this year. My primary job as consultant will be working on that report.

This public hearing then begins a historically important and significant process, both because of the importance of the subject matter that we're addressing and because of the method and the process that we're using. The subject matter is based on the recognition of the very real human diversity which is contained within society and the many ways in which human diversity is manifested in society's most fundamental institution -- the family.

Recognizing human diversity is very different from making judgments about it. We will not engage in the endless debate about the merits of different lifestyles or different personalities or different relationships or different types of family structures. For us that is all academic. The function of the Task Force is to recognize that the world has indeed gotten so small and we're all living so close together, both in proximity and in communication, that we must learn to live together and we must learn to work together constructively if we're going to continue to exist at all. The focus, then, is to learn to work together constructively to solve problems, and not to make alienating judgments. If we are each part of a whole, how arrogant it would be for us to assume everyone else should be like us. And the very real fact is that everyone else is not like us. The society is a rich and magnificent cornucopia of unique and individual and diverse people and relationships. We often celebrate the most unique -- those whose creative genius have given us art and culture and made a difference in the world and have made a difference in history. So every day we in society actually reap the benefits of our human diversity. And that human diversity is nurtured and protected by the relationships and the families which are formed by individuals. Family, then, in all of its diversity, can be seen as a protective structure. Not in competition with the individual, but supportive of the individual.

Because of the important role of the family in the socialization structure of society and the support structure it provides for individuals, Councilman Woo stated in the Task Force mandate: "Government should encourage the formation and development of family relationships and should not foster discrimination against families; nor should it tolerate unfair private discrimination against families." Councilman Woo specifically asked that the Task Force study and document the nature and extent of the family in all its diversity in Los Angeles and to investigate any evident problems experienced by families -- in other words, to find out what's getting in the way of families fulfilling their important function in society. The emphasis is again on finding solutions to important and real problems. That is what these public hearings are all about -- gathering the facts and determining what actually exists.

Before closing I'd like to make a couple of observations regarding methodology. There are two ways to prepare a study of this sort. One emanates from bureaucrats and government officials and is based on ideology rather than on reality -- the way they like things to be as opposed to the way they really are. You have a report that comes from that approach on your desks in front of you. It's called "The Family," a report prepared by a White House study group. You can examine any part of that report and it becomes obvious that the report is exclusive rather than inclusive. It is limited by value judgments and by its manifestation of extraordinary intolerance.

Our approach is just the antithesis of this. It emanates from the bottom up. It is based on citizens coming together and hearing from other citizens at the local level. In that regard, our approach is more like the White House Conference on the Family during the Carter administration. This is not a partisan comment, it is simply a recognition that the Conference began with local conferences, exploring issues and choosing delegates to statewide conferences where further issues were identified and delegates chosen for regional conferences, and then ultimately issues and delegates were sent to the National Conference. And it should be noted that gridlock became more apparent the farther the conference got away from the local level. It is, then, my hope that this Task Force can serve as a model for other task forces at the local level and that working together we can identify and discuss the problems which impede the fulfillment of our full human potential, which is, after all, our city's most valuable resource.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you very much, Jay. On the subject of family violence and undocumented persons, Colleen Gomez Shelby is with us this afternoon from Su Casa, a shelter for victims of family violence.

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY

Shelter Director, Su Casa

Family Violence and Undocumented Persons

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: Thank you. Domestic violence these days now includes elder abuse, child abuse, not only the abuse that takes place between one person and another. As we progress in terms of terminology, non-generic things, we find that wife abuse is now a misnomer. It's abuse that occurs between any two people -- between couples who are the same sex, opposite sex, any combinations. Domestic violence is defined as violence between one person and another regardless of color, size, or age.

In the United States one out of four families is affected by domestic violence. It transcends all socioeconomic backgrounds, ethnicity, age, ethnic, and religious groups. One out of every two women in California during at least one time during her lifetime will be beaten by her partner. Children reared in violent homes are often traumatized even if they themselves are not actual physical assault victims, although 50% of them are physical abuse victims. A more startling statistic is 63% of California youth incarcerated for homicide are there because they killed their mother's abusers. It's a very high statistic.

Shelters generally provide a 24-hour hotline, food, clothing, temporary shelter. Stays vary from 30 days up to a year in the more long term established shelters. In Los Angeles County there are only 385 beds, although in 1986 in L.A. County there were at least 12,000 requests for shelter for victims of violence.

In 1986, Su Casa served approximately 1,800 women on our hotline and 272 women and children in our shelters. Su Casa is the only shelter in L.A. County and one out of two in Southern California that offer 24-hour Spanish bilingual services. As a consequence of this, we generally get referrals from a number of different agencies who are not able to deal with clients who speak Spanish. Of the women and children that we have served, approximately 58%-60% of these Spanish-speaking people are undocumented. Shelters in this society -- at least in L.A. County -- have been identified as being safe, meaning we don't ask for a green card. Bruises don't appear on people just because they don't have a green card. We see that there is an estimated 450,000 people of Latino origin residing in L.A. County, and we have probably served a number of those people, if not only for our shelter services but also for information and referral services. One thing

that makes it difficult for these women to leave is, it's a difficult period for any person to leave a violent relationship -- the number of extenuating circumstances why a person will not leave. In any relationships with someone you know, it's not easy to walk away. For an undocumented person, it is doubly hard. Undocumented people have tended to live in the shadows of society, have not actively sought out services. City government is the very people that they tend to stay away from. Most of the women who are identified as undocumented and who remain in violent relationships -- we see an extraordinary number -- 30 some percent -- who indicate to us the reason they stay is because their abuser told them that they would report them immediately to immigration if they left. Now immigration is more interested in clearing out hotels and restraints than they are worried about one or two families. Though the woman who is in a violent relationship and isn't documented doesn't really know this.

We have served a significant number of women who come from other countries, mostly from the Central American countries, the countries that are currently in war and in strife. Those women tend to have injuries more on the torture level. They have more often been kidnapped from their villages and brought to the United States with their abuser. Most of them have been forced to take care of their abuser's mistresses and we see that in a very high percentage. The women who are the victims in this case tend to again stay with the abuser because he's the only one probably who speaks her language. She's afraid to venture out. If she's a rural person, she's not very sophisticated in knowing how to work in another setting. Also, she especially fears being deported. The United States represents a lot of hope for a lot of people. They're not going to risk that. Even if they try and find out the truth of it, they're not going to risk deportation. Thus, they stay in the relationship much longer. The women that we serve who were born here and who are Spanish-speaking tend to have different reasons for staying -- most of them, though, that are inherent in the Latino culture. It's a matter of family, wife, duty, God, a whole number of things.

What, then, can city government do to help alleviate family violence in the undocumented community? What we see is that most of the services that will be provided to undocumented people are filtered down through agencies that provide services without worrying about whether these people are documented -- such as the shelter. Su Casa and Center for Pacific Asian Women are the two centers in L.A. County which provide specific services to specific ethnic populations. Between these two organizations, we get a number of referrals for these specific populations in working with violence and also other aspects of their life. I don't think there will ever be a way where undocumented people will ever feel safe. We'll see what happens after the new law goes into effect, but still there will be a time when people are not feeling that immigration will come out every day.

One recommendation is that the city can help us keep our doors open. Funding varies. We get federal funding from the Community Services block grant, which was cut in the recent administration round of federal cutbacks. The County of Los Angeles provides marriage license fees -- the monies that you pay every time you get married -- to fund domestic violence programs and battered women's shelters. However, shelters are always struggling for survival because from year to year we don't know whether or not a grant will be renewed, if donations will come in, if tax laws are going to kill us. Administration changes, philosophy changes -- domestic violence is hot one year, child abuse hot a different year. We need consistency in funding. We need to make sure that at least the basic services are available always; the hot line, the shelter, the counseling program for the victims. In many domestic violence programs, outreach services to victims who do not want shelter for a number of different reasons tend to be very small, as is the program for the abusers, because the focus of all the funding tends to be on direct services to victims and not on preventative services.

My second recommendation is to suggest to private industry that it should get more involved in ongoing and consistent support with shelters. Adopt a shelter, have employees do a collection whereby that's their holiday exchange and donate that to domestic violence programs. As public funds dwindle, private industry needs to take up more of this slack, and most of them have set up foundations to do that; however, again they have their own restrictions and their certain ways to get into those foundations and it makes it a little bit difficult. Cold, hard cash is what is needed -- not furniture, not clothes, not food -- because those things are readily available. It is cold, hard cash that is needed, to keep the doors open, to pay for basic operating expenses; not to pay for anybody's raises; just to keep the doors open.

Three, support the maintenance both philosophically and monetarily of specialized domestic violence units within law-enforcement and criminal justice systems. Cheryl Ward Smith heads the Domestic Violence Council, and that has proven very effective for shelters that interact with other agencies such as law enforcement and criminal justice in order to maintain these specialized units. A new law was passed in January of 1986 which mandates law enforcement training for all police officers. I'm involved with that training with L.A. County Sheriff and Rio Hondo Police Academy so I've trained quite a number of the officers. Just in our Su Casa statistics, we have seen at least a 30% increase in the number of referrals of women to our hotline who were referred to us by the officers on the street. Sgt. Bob Canfield heads the unit out of L.A.P.D. which is the specialized violence unit. However, that unit is ending its three-year pilot program and it faces possible cutbacks. We would like to advocate that those units stay intact, and the domestic violence aspect doesn't get dispersed among reports, and then they throw us in under burglary and assault and a few other things. We would like this because once the victims know and the abusers know

that police are more supportive towards pressing charges -- the length in pressing charges, the reticence in even pressing charges then they will be more likely to come forward in much more frequency -- especially for undocumented women not worrying that the police are going to take them away or take their abusers away because usually the out-of-country women fear that, and that's why they won't follow through with pressing charges or any kind of formal legal notice -- even a T.R.O. -- because in their countries either government or police represent something that could be bought off. Also in those countries, men tend to stick with men and the woman is always the one who is wrong. So a number of those women will not follow through with pressing charges or any kind of formal legal proceeding against the abuser. These specialized units -- and right now the only one that has one is L.A.P.D. -- we are hoping that L.A. County Sheriff will establish one, but I think what we'll see is an increase in the number of women who will report and follow through with pressing the charges and also the number of abusers who will take it seriously now instead of being told to walk around the block.

With the new law, Senate Bill 1472, domestic violence is now a crime, it's not a family dispute. It's assault crime. Under the Penal Code it's 273.5. However, under that Penal Code it does not acknowledge partners of the same sex. So there should be an amendment to that statute.

Next, we would recommend legislation that would mandate counseling for abusers. Though abusers are the way they are, they are also victims. They have learned the abuse that they are inflicting upon other people. They have either witnessed it or personally experienced the abuse, and they need help. Though maybe 1% of all abusers even admit to accepting responsibility, mandated counseling is a way to begin stopping that continued generation of violence.

Fifth, you can do a number of things in terms of helping other agencies to know that shelters exist, that domestic violence programs exist -- work very closely with the city attorney's office, the D.A.'s office in getting people on that committee-- to have special prosecution units within those departments, to make sure that they're not dropped or kicked down from a felony to misdemeanor because someone wants to make a bigger issue out of a different case. I think family violence is everyone's concern. It happens too frequently in our society for people to ignore it. You never know if dollars that you spend on a shelter might be used for someone you know -- you'll be glad that they're open because someone you know will need them. So help us keep our doors open.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: I would like to suggest that we give each of the appropriate teams, if they're present, the opportunity to open the questions. Each of these topics is very important and we need to move very quickly.

MARIO PEREZ: You mention the sources for funding. Currently, what sort of funds do you receive from the City of Los Angeles to aid Su Casa?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: The only funds that have been awarded to any shelter in the city of Los Angeles have been from the settlement on behalf of L.A.P.D. who were sued because their police officers were not in compliance with that law. The City of Los Angeles does not give any money to any shelters per se. L.A. County does.

MARIO PEREZ: You mentioned the L.A.P.D. specialized units. Approximately how many members are a part of these units? And if you know, what areas do they cover in the City of Los Angeles?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: They are headquartered, I believe, downtown. There is only one sergeant and six patrol officers.

MARIO PEREZ: You mentioned Su Casa and the Asian Pacific Shelter are the only two shelters that offer 24-hour bilingual hotline. Obviously there are situations where immediate steps have to be taken to aid the person who's calling. How do you provide immediate steps for those individuals that call in areas that you are not necessarily prepared to aid? For example, a woman calling across town and needing your assistance -- are there resources that you can provide?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: Oh yes. We probably have more resources in knowing which agencies will speak the needed language than maybe our regular agency. We only have 12 bed spaces in our shelter, so we can't always take the people who are calling. So we have to refer somewhere else. Even for temporary stay, D.P.S.S. is one agency that we refer to quite often because they can provide a motel voucher for at least one night and that's getting them off the street until maybe the next morning. And that's what we do.

LISA PORCHE-BURKE: Colleen, could you tell me -- I know you said that there's 385 beds for over 12,000 requests and that's the County of Los Angeles. Do you know -- are there any beds in the City of Los Angeles?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: Seventy-five, and that would be a high estimate.

LISA PORCHE-BURKE: You also mentioned preventive things that you do. How do you advertise? Do you advertise that your services are available and it doesn't matter if you're documented or not? Who do you advertise to?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: We're in the Yellow Pages. Most shelters are in the Yellow Pages. Our street address is not advertised. Our hotline

is advertised. That's the point of intake for all shelters. We go to schools, social service agencies, law enforcement, medical personnel -- those people who would be most likely to identify abuse victims first -- counseling agencies, community groups, service clubs, and high schools. We're trying to get in the junior highs.

LISA PORCHE-BURKE: And, typically, the undocumented person has found you through an attorney?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: No. Most of them come through word-of-mouth. Because they have probably sent what we consider our legal scout to make sure that there is not going to be any repercussions for them. So shelters have been identified as being "safe." There's no worry about papers to receive services. We find that most of the women that come to us are from word-of-mouth -- especially the undocumented ones.

LISA PORCHE-BURKE: Typically, what has been the experience of the undocumented woman that you've seen -- with the police department, when they've come out on a call, those officers that you haven't trained?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: Usually, if a police officer responds to a violent scene, the woman who is undocumented will not come out of the house. The abuser will come out of the house and tell his side of the story and tell the officer that the victim was just hysterical, on her period, or she did really run into that wall. We're training the officers to make sure they get both sides of the story and to break eye contact between the victim and the suspect at the scene. Because if he's glaring at her she's not going to say anything. Mostly, though, it's kind of ironic that the undocumented women, because of their unrealistic fear of being deported or having immigration find out about them, tend to have one of two choices. In their countries, law enforcement meant extreme punishment. They would rather have their abuser alive than dead because police have taken them away and may not see that there's a process and just because they've taken him away at the scene means he's going to come back the next day -- he's not. But in Central America that's not always the case -- so they're not going to report. Hopefully, as we increase our services and reach out more, they will understand. Also, the undocumented abuser tends to not want to follow the laws of the United States, over which battering is a crime, and the new law will mandate that the officers tell them, "Well it doesn't matter what you say, you've committed a crime."

CAROL GILL: When you talked about all the groups that domestic violence comes across I can't help but be sensitized to missing my group - people with disabilities. Yet evidence suggests that people with disabilities compose an extremely high-risk group for domestic violence. As a mental health practitioner, I'm concerned about the insensibility of shelters to people with disabilities, including physical disabilities and cognitive, sensory

disabilities, blindness, deafness, etc. Do you know what's being done to open the shelters to disabled people?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: We at Su Casa recently hired a person fluent in sign -- ASL, Pidgin, and all those other ones, and have attached a TDD to our hotline. As far as we know, we're the only one in California with that service. We are also in the process of building a new shelter which will make at least one room "wheelchair accessible." Shelters are moving towards making their current buildings wheelchair accessible, though it's a very slow process because most of the time we have to take what we get in terms of a physical facility and to renovate something into a place, where a physically disabled person would be a tremendous amount of money of which there's no funds available to do that. If there were funds available to do that, and as shelters become more aware, that is happening more and more. I'd say about a quarter of the current shelters now have handicap access. The sight disability, no. The TDD -- again, there's just us as far as we know. It's hard for us to go out in the community with someone who doesn't know how to sign or someone who's not sensitive to the issues of people who are physically challenged, though that is an issue with the Southern California Coalition on Battered Women.

ELAINE SIEGEL: My question is the concern for mothers who fear reporting, who feel the concern about what will happen to their children etc. What provisions do you have for the children of abuse victims? Are there provisions in the shelters for children as well?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: Oh yes. The shelters are designed for women and their children. We do not accept children as our primary clients. One woman comes in with an average of 2-3 children. So at most shelters, there is a counseling program. We have an on-site school, we have a respite care program and a child-abuse identification, and parent-education classes. And shelters are more and more incorporating that into their program.

MARIO PEREZ: Do you know of any shelter that exists in the City of Los Angeles that services undocumented people?

COLLEEN GOMEZ SHELBY: I think Good Shepherd might.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you very much, Colleen. We appreciate your being here today. Virginia Uribe, if you will come forward. Virginia is doing some pioneering work. She is a teacher and counselor at Fairfax High School and she has come today to speak on gay and lesbian youth, the curricula, and special programs available in the L.A. Unified School District. Welcome.

VIRGINIA URIBE

Teacher-Counselor, Fairfax High School

Gay and Lesbian Issues in School Programs

VIRGINIA URIBE: Thank you. My name is Virginia Uribe and I am a health and science teacher at Fairfax High School where I have been for over thirty years. My particular focus is gay and lesbian youth as they are represented in the curriculum and in the counseling structure of the Los Angeles Unified School District. The Los Angeles Unified School District is the second largest school district in the United States. We have in our Junior and senior high schools in excess of 350,000 students. So, if statistics are as we think they are, we are dealing with thousands and thousands of gay and lesbian youngsters, most of whom remain invisible in the system. Now, there are several areas of concern that I have in regard to this situation.

The first area of concern is in regard to educational curriculum material. Whenever relevant, we feel that the gay and lesbian population should be included. In fact, this is not true. I know of three major curriculum guides that are in existence right now and I'd like to bring them to your attention. One is a guide on suicide prevention. This has come down from the state and it is presently in the process of being implemented on the high school level. All high school teachers are being in-serviced for the suicide prevention course. Although we know in the gay and lesbian community that youngsters who are gay and lesbian are at much greater risk for suicide than in the random population, there is no mention of sexual conflict as a cause of suicide in this entire curriculum. So that's one glaring omission.

The second guide that is presently out is called "The Humanities Approach to Culture" which is part of a course called "Hands Across the Campus." The purpose of this course is to reduce bigotry and improve the relations between various cultural, racial and ethnic groups. This is a huge draft. It's in excess of 750 pages long, yet there is no mention of the gay and lesbian population as a group that has suffered discrimination or that is even mentioned at all in this.

The third curriculum is a model curriculum for human rights and genocide. This was mandated by Assembly Bill 1273 as material to be included in history-social science classes. As a matter of fact, it was the subject of an article a couple of days ago in the Los Angeles Times. Maybe

some of you read this. Of course there is no mention of the gay and lesbian population in this. So these are the three major curriculum guides and, of course, we feel that this is a glaring omission. So this is one area of great concern.

The next area of concern we have is the state and local curriculum guides for family life and sex education. The state guide -- I believe there is a hearing on that this month. This is already the subject of tremendous controversy because of what they call uncomfortable issues -- like abortion, and birth control, and, of course, homosexuality. I believe that the Parents & Friends of Lesbians and Gays is a group representing the gay and lesbian perspective in Sacramento, and they're going to testify at the next hearing.

Then the local guide that has been developed by the Los Angeles Unified School District: the feeling among many gay and lesbian people is that there is too little mention of homosexuality in this guide, and that it comes too late in the curriculum. However, we are working with the people in the Health Education Division to try and provide more material in the area of homosexuality. They have been very cooperative about this. So we hope to improve this guide.

Another area of concern that I have is the counseling programs for gay and lesbian youth. I believe that the only counseling program that exists for gay and lesbian youth in the entire Los Angeles Unified School District is the program that I have developed at Fairfax High School which is called Project Ten. I have brochures which I will leave here and can be passed around to the Committee. This is the only program for gay and lesbian youth, I think, not only in Los Angeles, but in the United States. I have not heard of another program. Naturally, I feel that counseling programs for gay and lesbian teenagers in both high school and junior high school are extremely, extremely important. These children are very often high-risk children because of their stigmatization and the factors that go along with that. They are at great risk for suicide, for depression, for substance abuse, and, of course, for sexually transmitted diseases. Many times they have tremendous problems with their families, particularly if they tell their families of their sexual orientation. Many times these youngsters are thrown out on the street or they run away from home. So there are great number of family problems that are associated with this issue. In addition to that we now have the tragedy of AIDS, and gay and lesbian youngsters are extremely difficult to get education to as a group because they are so invisible. Although we have our health education classes which do something, it's extremely difficult to target particularly young gay men for the kind of information that they need. Project Ten is one way to gain access to them. Through the umbrella of programs that we can do with Project Ten, we can gain access to this population.

Another area of concern that I have is how are teachers trained, and is there enough funding? I was asked to comment on this. Generally, teachers are not trained well at all on gay and lesbian issues. Most of them are in total confusion about it. They don't know anything about gay and lesbian people. Most of the teachers who are gay and lesbian are extremely silent in the schools and for all practical purposes we are ignored because no one speaks up for us. So this is a real problem. Sometimes the training breaks down just because no one mentions that there are gay and lesbian people around. Just like when I questioned about the "Hands Across the Campus" curriculum I said "How come there's no mention of homosexuals as a group?" And the person that I spoke to said, "Well, gee, the woman who wrote the draft is a really nice person and I think she probably didn't even think of it." And I think that that is what happens a lot of times in the program. It's not that there is hostility against having the subject raised, it's just that it's not raised. It is not raised because if the gay and lesbian people don't raise it, the rest of the population is not going to raise the issue of this minority group. I think that I should mention however in the area of health education they are doing a lot in the Los Angeles Unified School District. They have certainly dealt with the subject of sexually transmitted diseases. I think that Los Angeles Unified is one of the first that has a comprehensive AIDS education program. They've worked with a lot of the members of the Board of Education and they are trying to give the perspective as much as they can. But they still need a lot of help in that area.

I'd like to conclude by making some suggestions of what can be done. This is not something that needs a lot of money, which you might be surprised to hear. Mostly, in the Los Angeles Unified School District what needs to happen is a change of attitude and I think that pressure has to come from committees and task forces like this. The message has to be given to the members of the Board of Education and to people who have some influence in the Los Angeles Unified School District that programs like Project Ten should be expanded to other schools. There is no reason why it should stay in one school. Certainly every gay and lesbian child ought to have a right to talk to some adult in any school where they are so that kind of a program has to be urged to be expanded. I think that contacts have to be made with the head of Health Education to constantly work where they're very receptive to these kinds of ideas. But we have to make the effort to work with those people so that they include issues of homosexuality and gay and lesbian people in their curriculum. I think a contact should be made to the person who wrote the "Hands Across the Campus" guide, suggesting that maybe she should review the draft and include one other minority group when they are speaking of minority groups.

Do any of you have questions?

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Very good. Thank you, Virginia.

DIANE HIMES: Something just happened in Sacramento for your information too. Bill Honig has on his desk a rewritten "homosexual neutral" definition that is supposed to be coming down the pike and a very expanded AIDS/sexual-transmission information. Twenty-one Republican assemblymen, and we're now up to eight Democratic Assembly members are petitioning him with language from 1890 about sexually deviant behavior and they're trying to squelch it. There is an organization called "Life" that's 25 gay organizations keeping an AIDS lobbyist in Sacramento. What I would appreciate very much, and I'm so pleased to meet you after hearing about you and the wonderful program, is input from you and from me to you that we could make this more a statewide issue than a citywide issue -- specific cities and specifically to Bill Honig -- when I go up this week. What my concern is, is that we can make homosexuality a neutral subject. We could teach the heterosexual youth how not to get AIDS too.

VIRGINIA URIBE: May I comment back? I believe that the directives from the Center for Disease Control -- perhaps the approach should be in teaching about AIDS -- and I have actually been doing this in some noontime seminars is to not focus on lifestyles but rather to focus on the type of behavior that is high risk and I have found that that is a very effective approach. I wonder when you say a homosexually neutral position but I think it is possible to not make a value judgement when you talk about risk behavior if you just talk about it in the general sense and I have been addressing groups of 40 students that are mixed groups. They are gay and non-gay -- one of the reasons I have been doing that -- trying this approach that you're speaking of -- is because even with Project Ten and with all the work I've been doing it is very difficult to get the young gay men to come by themselves into a room where they're going to be looked at and just have them. So I've expanded these safe-sex seminars to include everybody and this neutral position does work.

DIANE HIMES: I have a question on testimony from one of our students, saying that the way the L.A. Unified School District training was scheduled, there were very, very few teachers being trained in homosexual issues, and/or AIDS issues, and she said that at this time there were only 60 teachers who had been trained.

VIRGINIA URIBE: Well, there aren't very many that are being trained. First, the training is limited, and then it's only directed to Health Education teachers because they're the ones who are supposed to be dealing with AIDS education. They had some training groups this summer and I think they were small. They were between 60 and 75 and I think that was because the funding was limited to that. Now, those were specific training sessions, but all health teachers -- as a result of the mandate from the Board of Education to teach about AIDS education -- all health teachers were in-serviced as a group last year, the health teachers and the nurses. That's somewhat satisfactory. Although I think that L.A. Unified is doing as

good a job as anyone is doing with AIDS education, it really is not enough because the visibility has to be kept high all the time. Kids take health and then they don't hear anything more and they're amazingly ignorant.

DIANE HIMES: I received feedback from the National Organization of Women - National Headquarters, that they had just completed a study and it was their impression that heterosexual youth were not changing their sexual habits at all. For example, homosexual adults in San Francisco, as you know, have changed their behavior tremendously to try to prevent the spread of AIDS. But the heterosexual youths do not feel affected.

VIRGINIA URIBE: They don't feel affected, and the homosexual youth -- young, gay males also don't know what's happening, the ones that are in the school. If they're not part of an organized gay community and if somehow they haven't gotten to the "Stop AIDS" project or they don't know of anyone who has brought them, they don't know what's happening. When they get to high school they have already engaged in unsafe sex practices and everything and never heard anything in junior high and they're already there in high school and that's when they start to hear the message.

ADELE STARR: It seems to me we're talking about two different things about homosexuality. One is about AIDS education and the other is education in connection with suicide prevention, culture, and genocide as well. What age students are now being taught about sexually transmitted diseases?

VIRGINIA URIBE: Junior high school students and senior high school students. They are supposed to be taught in Los Angeles Unified. They are supposed to be getting that in their 7th grade health class.

ADELE STARR: Apparently the teachers are trained. Now what about the training of all the teachers that are going to be needed if we do manage to get all this guidance change. What can be done to get that training on the way?

VIRGINIA URIBE: I have a list of people within the school district that can be contacted and I believe that pressure has to be put on the superintendent, the deputy superintendent, the people who are in charge of counseling and guidance. They just have to keep hearing the message of what they need to include.

ADELE STARR: Well, if it's included and there is no one there to teach it -- that's why I'm raising....

VIRGINIA URIBE. Well, we'll have to develop people to teach. I will lead that myself, if they will just release me timewise from school to do that and encourage the development of this in the counseling program.

That's why I say so much of it is just a change of attitude. A lot of people ask me if I have encountered hostility about this program and I really have not. We approach it as a counseling thing and so far there has not been very much that's negative but what I have encountered is simply indifference or invisibility. I have to keep pushing it to let people know it's happening.

ADELE STARR: We are getting requests now from all over the country for Project Ten pamphlets that Virginia has put together.

VIRGINIA URIBE: Well, your organization, Parents & Friends of Gays, has also done as much as anyone could do with regard to the schools, but I'm sure you've encountered this too. It's very frustrating. You put yourself there as a resource and you become an approved resource and then nobody asks you to come and speak so you have to fight that all the time.

PAULA STARR: Do you think that with the L.A. Unified School District's school-based clinics that Project Ten could be somehow implemented with having us apply that pressure to the school board?

VIRGINIA URIBE: Well, I would prefer to keep it separate from the school-based clinics because they are the subject of tremendous controversy right now. I would just as soon that the archbishop not hear about Project Ten.

THOMAS FRANK COLEMAN: For the record, I would like to report that State Superintendent of Education Bill Honig had a meeting a week ago Monday with members of the San Francisco lesbian and gay community. He was receptive to including gay and lesbian issues where appropriate in various places in the curriculum, such as including gays in the genocide curriculum and in the model suicide-prevention curriculum.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Virginia, thank you very much. We appreciate your testimony. I couldn't help but think when Virginia came to her recommendations, when she said that these were either low or non-cost items, she said that the first recommendation was a change of attitude, which strikes me as maybe the highest price that any of us pays when we change attitudes about something. A good comment and excellent program. Thank you.

Thomas Kring is our next witness. He is the Executive Director of the Regional Family Planning Council and he is here today to give an overview of teen pregnancy prevention programs.

THOMAS KRING

Executive Director, Regional Family-Planning Council

What Works in Teen Pregnancy-Prevention Programs

THOMAS KRING: You gave me a topic that if I knew what worked we wouldn't be here because there wouldn't be a problem of teen pregnancy. So let me tell you briefly about what we do and then I'm not going to go into great detail about the programs but to give you some ideas.

We fund 35 programs including the County of Los Angeles. We provide comprehensive reproductive-health services including birth control, sterilization, no abortion (and by the way I don't represent the archbishop) to about 165,000 low-income women per year. We do not ask for documentation before we provide services. We have numerous problems existing in our clinics that affect teen pregnancy and I will leave you some statistics. But let me just give you a few things to reflect on as we look at the program.

The first couple of statistics are 3 or 4 years old and I think are probably still accurate. Twelve million of the 29 million young people between the ages of 13 and 19 in the United States have had sexual intercourse. By age 19, 80% of all males and 70% of all females have had sexual intercourse. That's probably fairly accurate for Los Angeles County and the same percentage of statistics, except Los Angeles is higher. Let me give you some raw quick statistics for L.A. County just to show you what we're talking about. We don't break the statistics to citywide. They are countywide. One out of every 8 births recorded in Los Angeles County in 1984 was to a teenager -- which means there were approximately 17,604 births to teens. When I say teens I'm counting 18 and under and not 19 and under. The birthrate for L.A. County is 54.9 per 1,000 which is higher than the birthrate for the State of California or the birthrate of the United States. In 1984, 12% of all the births in L. A. County were to teens. Approximately 26.2% of all the abortions performed the same year in L. A. County were for teen age girls, or approximately 20,674 abortions performed in L.A. County were performed on teenage girls. I can talk about second pregnancies. I'll say that more than 75% of all pregnant teens in L.A. County drop out of high school and never graduate. Probably of most significance is the annual Medicare costs, MediCal costs, for delivering teen pregnancies, neonatal intensive care, and rehospitalization that costs the State of California \$105 million. That's only for birth and things associated with birth and does not count the welfare costs that go beyond birth.

What's happening in Los Angeles in relation to teen pregnancy? There's a lot happening, a lot of programs. We have programs in the County Hospital, where every single teen who gives birth at the County Hospital, receives extensive counseling related to contraceptive care, related to trying to prevent second pregnancies or third pregnancies, as the case may be, at times. We have teen programs where we have teen advocates in the schools who are delivering sex education, peer education, peer counseling, peer advocates. We have people who are being paid to be teen mentors, role models; we've hired football players to talk to their peers about why they abstain. You can just about name it. And there's a couple of people that I know here in the audience. Paula Starr and Nora Baladerian could tell you, probably, the programs that are funded to deal with teen pregnancy are way too long for us to mention in 5 minutes, or 5 hours. We have been working closely with the schools in terms of school-based clinics. We have programs that are dealing specifically with teens and chlamydia. We have teens dealing with teens and AIDS. You are aware of AIDS, chlamydia is equally a significant problem. We find in our teen population about 17% of all teens right now that are coming into the clinic have chlamydia without knowing that they have chlamydia. Chlamydia is probably the widest spread -- the most "popular" disease there is. It's a silent disease, it has very few symptoms, teens don't know they have it. The results are infertility. It's estimated that probably as high as 75% of all cases of infertility in the United States may have resulted from chlamydia infection at one time or another. The problems facing us with teens, with the clinics, are great and I want to stress that of all the clients that we serve, (only about 12-15% of our clients are teens), the average client being seen in our family planning programs are extremely low-income. In Los Angeles County it's: 83% are below 100% of the federal poverty level which is extremely low income, do not have MediCal or Medicare and already have one child. And the average age of our client is between 22 and 24. The average client is also Hispanic, because 65% of our client's at this time happen to be Hispanic.

There are several things that we would like to see somebody do. A crisis facing the clinics right now is malpractice insurance. I know that it is not regulated by the city, it's not regulated by the county, and the state claims they don't regulate it either. We have clinics that last year paid \$4,000 for malpractice insurance, were cancelled with 30-day notice, have found new carriers where their bills are \$90-95,000. We have one clinic where we give them \$60,000 in federal funds and the latest insurance quote was \$90,000 for malpractice insurance. They will be closing. We have a major clinic in Santa Monica that will be closing Monday unless we advance them funds because they don't have malpractice insurance and can't get malpractice insurance. There's a tremendous crisis. We'll be calling a press conference shortly to discuss this. Without finding malpractice insurance, we'll see clinic after clinic close and the county will be forced to take over all services.

What can happen? I think what we would like to see the city do -- obviously we'd like to see money. We've received a couple of very small grants at our clinics from the community development funds. But I think more important than money -- which I realize the city doesn't have and the city doesn't grant money for health very often -- more important would be to see the city become actively involved in endorsing projects. I wish that the City Council were well aware of what's going on in teen projects. I'd like to see a Teen Pregnancy Task Force to look at what could happen. One thing simple that could happen that makes a big difference is endorsements. To have the City Council actually endorse a grant proposal to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. It may seem like a small thing to the city, but a clinic that's struggling to get that kind of endorsement on official stationery can mean a heck of a lot. Endorsements to the state. We have legislation which we'll be introducing relating to malpractice. We think the County Board of Supervisors will support us if the City Council would support the state getting involved. The main thing I could say is endorsements from the state, the federal government and the foundations. Somebody mentioned getting industry to give private money. It's basically using the clout of the City Council to encourage others to become involved and I think it's the most important thing the city can do for us.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Each of these topics is sort of fascinating to us so it's our temptation to keep everybody here for hours, but we'll refrain. I'd like to begin with questions from Nora Baladerian and then perhaps back to Adele and Paula Starr.

NORA BALADERIAN: I have a couple of questions. The first relates to the teen -- the peer counselors -- which seems to be a most effective way of dealing with it. You mentioned a couple of things about that, but one is the monies that I know were allocated a couple of years ago for promotion of abstinence and I'm wondering how effective that is.

THOMAS KRING: There is still federal money earmarked for abstinence promotion. I think it's important to give kids permission to say no. It's important to give kids permission to abstain. I don't think that's the answer. I was waiting for the President last night in the State of the Union speech to say, in relation to drugs and sex "Just say no." I'm not sure it works with drugs and I know it doesn't work with sex. In the heat of passion you don't say no. I think it's important but it's not the answer.

NORA BALADERIAN: Is it effective?

THOMAS KRING: There have been abstinence programs that have been effective. I don't want to say abstinence programs. There have been programs that have been effective and dealt with abstinence as one of the issues. There's a program called "teen talk" that's been an experimental program in Texas, basically kids who weren't sexually active, some of them

became sexually active, some didn't. There was only one kid in the entire program that was sexually active and decided to abstain. But what it did do was -- it gave kids permission to continue abstaining if they wanted to and encouraged kids to be responsible and use contraceptives if they didn't, or also have safe sex. I would recommend a good program coming up on the 8th of February, Valerie. It's going to deal with two teenagers trying to have sex and using contraceptives. It's a good approach by the media to try and deal with it. The media is obviously one thing that we need to deal with. One other thing the city could do is write letters to the legislature opposing the Governor's block grant program. With the block grant program every single teen program that we fund in Los Angeles County will be defunded.

NORA BALADERIAN: The other question that I have is, are we seeing an improvement in the rate of teen pregnancy reduction and what creates reduction?

THOMAS KRING: We're seeing a drop nationwide in teen pregnancy and it's hard to say why. Part of it may be a fear factor that's there. I don't think it's a moral change. I'm not sure we can take much credit ourselves for the drop. We see more and more teens in the clinics but there are more and more teens in society. Teen pregnancy rates have gone down, the numbers have stayed about the same. There's been a lot of argument that says that what family planning has done is not decreased the number of pregnancies, decreased the number of births -- and I have to say that there's probably truth in that -- the number of births has decreased because of abortion being available, obviously; and because of kids getting counseling where they're made aware of their options. So the number of births has gone down drastically in recent years. We're still the highest pregnancy rate among the developed nations of the world.

PAULA STARR: Do you see L.A. County taking the leading role in the development of minority-sensitive family life education curriculum throughout the state, and perhaps nationwide?

THOMAS KRING: There's a need for it. We've had for 2 or 3 years now the multicultural, multilingual program which the state has told us they don't want to fund anymore.

PAULA STARR: In your opinion, why does the state want to defund that?

THOMAS KRING: Sacramento is not very multiethnic I'm sorry to say, in the hierarchy or the structure, or the people. I think it's an insensitivity on their part -- where they said basically you've done training and you've done basic language skills, virtually everybody in the state has had the opportunity to be trained once in the past three years, we've done

our share of multilingual, multicultural programs, which is an absurdity because of the staff turnover, the continuing client turnover etc. We'll continue to fight it, we'll continue to offer programs even without state funding. We'll fund it with Federal funds and continue to push more and more available, more and more diverse. Irene's just been on a task force dealing with Southeast Asians. I'm looking at what we should be doing there because we haven't done what we should have in Family Planning for the Southeast Asian population either.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: That's the best lead-in I've ever heard to the next witness. Thank you, Mr. Kring. Irene Kwan-Chu is here from the Chinatown Services Center which is a very large program and has a rich history behind it. She is here for a few minutes to speak with us about Asian/Pacific immigrant family needs, generally, with some suggestions, recommendations, and then we'll take questions.

IRENE KWAN-CHU

Chinatown Services Center

Asian/Pacific Immigrant Family Needs

IRENE KWAN-CHU: Thank you, Chris. I am Irene Chu and I'm here representing Chinatown Services Center, which is a community-based, comprehensive social service program. But also I'm here representing the Asian Pacific Planning Council, or APPCON which is a coalition of about 40 different organizations and individuals serving the human service needs of all the Asian Pacific community of all of Los Angeles County.

There are approximately 26 different groups that comprise the Asian Pacific population. I won't take 5 minutes times 26 to go into this testimony. But the complexity of the testimony I have today, includes all these groups, their problems, and their resolution to their problems. To further complicate matters the immigration pattern was quite different for all of these groups. Therefore there are wide different generational timing and that makes the identification of these problems also a problem. Also within each of these Asian Pacific groups there different age group, each with its characteristics and problems also. It's important to keep in mind that all the problems that we're addressing today, in terms of family diversity, exist in the Asian community. There are two major barriers, language and cultural adjustment, that supersede over the entire problem.

I would like to give you a little bit of a demographic background of these groups. The Asian Pacific population in Los Angeles grew from 338,000 in 1970, to 457,00 in the 1980's, which represented 92% increase in this 10 year period. Now, currently in 1985, the estimation of the Asian Pacific population for Los Angeles County is 792,000. Since the immigration pattern for the Asian Pacific population is again rising toward the high levels we had in the early period in U.S. history, it is safe to assume that this growth will continue. In fact, the Asian Pacific Rim profile put out by United Way has already estimated that the Asian population will be the largest growth population in Los Angeles County. That is not even taking into consideration since 1975, when a massive influx of Southeast Asian refugees started coming into Los Angeles County to further complicate many of the problems in Los Angeles County. With statistics such as 65% foreign born, 6% speaking absolutely no English and 21% not speaking English well in the Asian community, it really gives you a clear picture of the special characteristics.

In trying to identify some of the problems that exist in the community, since there are so many groups of us, I did telephone surveys to the various community organizations and I identified five major groups with the most population in Los Angeles County. They are Japanese, Chinese, Koreans, Philipinos, and Southeast Asian refugee population. Southeast Asia really includes Vietnamese, Laotians and Cambodians. While there are really very diverse differences among these groups, there are some common maladies and a lot of them have really to do with the problem that exists in the community. I came up with about eight that were identified by these five major groups.

The first one was in cultural conflict in immigrant adjustment. Whereas the Asian Pacific values, such as family, stresses interdependence and maintenance of harmony, their newly adopted homeland in the U.S. stresses individuality, independence and competition, thereby causing some problems for families in adapting to this new culture. Many have to learn a completely new language, adopt a new lifestyle, cope with pressing economic survival issues. Also, too many of the immigrants face discrimination both on an individual basis, and on a systematic level, that slows down their culturing process as well for their families.

The second problem that faces them are intergenerational conflicts. Many of the families -- with the children usually adopting the new values at a much faster rate than the parents -- they have conflict in communications, and adopting of the different values. Many of these problems result in the disengaging of the family unit. In the Asian Pacific family they traditionally value the extended family where there is a wide system of support. In America, they must face up to the fact that the nuclear family is really the norm. The traditional world where the parents demand complete obedience from the children, especially a father, oftentimes are impractical to practice in the U.S., therefore creating problems in generational communications. Where children are often more anxious to acculturate -- be accepted by their peers -- parents have conflicting feelings about abandoning traditional values and beliefs that can further split up the family unit.

The third problem that faces this community is marital conflicts and domestic violence. As more stresses are placed on the family, marital disharmony and conflict often arise. Because the immigrant families have to face so many different adjustment processes, a lot of these stresses are added on to the family acculturation process. The parents have to face problems such as role reversals, temporary or long-term setback in career goals and earning, loss of self-esteem and status. All of this creates a lot of marital problems that even extends to domestic violence. Where divorce and separation are still viewed as a shameful outcome of a marriage a lot of the abandoned wives are often isolated emotionally and financially, with themselves and their children. Just for your information, a third of the

Southeast Asian refugee families are headed by female households. Therefore are economically disadvantaged.

With all of these problems facing the immigrant family, the number four problem is the emotional disorder that faces a lot of these families. There is a great underutilization of the mental health system because of the lack of knowledge of the mental health system in the U.S. as well as not enough culturally relevant services that are available to serve the Asian Pacific population.

A fifth problem is elderly support. When both husband and wife must work in order to minimally provide for their families, a lot of the elderly parents become burdensome to the couple and their children because the Asian Pacific value teaches children to respect their elders as well as taking care of elder parents. When they cannot do it because of circumstances in the U.S., it really puts a lot of guilt feelings on these children. To compound matters, these immigrant elderly usually are not well versed in the English language, do not have marketable skills; therefore they cannot work and support themselves. Many are not eligible for governmental assistance, medical aid or housing, so they really do become a burden to to the family.

The number six problem is child guidance or school adjustment. Because of economic survival, many of the immigrant parents must necessarily work very long hours to meet their survival needs; therefore, their children go unsupervised and without guidance and a lot of times the parents really don't understand the law that exists in the U. S. in regard to child neglect, child welfare and abuse law, so they oftentimes get into trouble because the definition from their homeland and the definition from the U.S. is very different.

The number seven problem arises from the number six problem, which is delinquency or youth gangs. Because many youngsters are in their haste to enter into the American culture and be like their American peers, they will overcompensate by being overly Americanized therefore creating more conflict between the parent and the children. Or they will band together with their own ethnic group for support and social acceptance, which can become gang related activities. Because parents are preoccupied with economic survival they often don't have the time or the energy or the understanding to deal with these kind of problems for their children.

The last problem I identified is substance abuse. From all the above-stated problems, a lot of times the youngsters take the easy way out, which is escape by going into the drugs. The Asian American Drug Abuse Program is only one agency currently available in Los Angeles County that can provide culturally relevant and sensitive services to deal with drug addiction. Because the parents are not very familiar with the American system, they do not know where to begin to get help.

There is a general consensus in the Asian Pacific community that there are not enough services available that are culturally relevant and sensitive to serving the Asian Pacific community. In my own view, the prevention really goes a long way. By interfering at the beginning stage where the immigrant family first comes into the country, a lot of the problems or potential problems could be averted and it would be much more cost-effective in terms of money as well as suffering in the long run.

I recommend the city should study the needs, and research available services currently in existence to deal with the immigrant family problems. Secondly, to document unmet needs by the city, private sources, and other concerned entities about the serious lack of services to the Asian Pacific community. Thirdly, encourage private/public partnership development to address these problems. Number four, using the community development block grant and other general revenue administered by the city to search for ways to fund organizations to serve the Asian Pacific groups. Five, to encourage the school system to develop a relevant orientation in educational material to educate both youngsters and parents about the new culture and the new system. To encourage the federal government to fund more low income and elderly housing in the various Asian Pacific concentrated areas. Number seven, to provide mandatory cultural awareness training to all the public service employees and encourage the same in the private sector to promote better understanding among the diverse groups that reside in Los Angeles and especially Asian Pacific communities. Lastly, to sponsor local legislation and encourage state and federal governments to develop the same to protect the immigrant rights -- and one of the ones that is being really threatened right now is the "English-Only Initiative" which can ultimately affect a lot of the services that are currently available to the Asian Pacific community.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you. That was very focused testimony and we appreciate it. Let's go immediately to questions.

MARIO PEREZ: Currently is there a center where an immigrant, an Asian, for example, can report to and a center where he or she may be notified of all the available means and resources that they may have, or are these pretty much dispersed around the city of Los Angeles? Do you know of any?

IRENE KWAN-CHU: Well there are some agencies available and Chinatown Services Center in Chinatown is one. We serve mostly Chinese and the Indo-Chinese population. There is one in Little Tokyo serving the Japanese and usually elderly population. That's it. The Korean community has a Youth Service Center. There also is a Philippino Youth Service Center, but there is no widespread, comprehensive social service to serve these other groups. Also, there is no systematic way of identifying needs for the immigrant. If problems are serious enough, they will drop into the

service center, for a lot of Asians are not used to asking for assistance. So by the time they ask they are in crisis or they are chronically or severely in need, which is what I went back to in terms of cost effectiveness. We can catch this before it gets that far.

MARIO PEREZ: I think what you just said really accentuates the lack of existing preventive programs. My other question is, one of the things we understand in terms of the Asian community is that they do experience underemployment rather than unemployment, much greater than in other communities. What sort of programs are there to help these individuals integrate more into the economy and have them offer their resources? Do you know of any?

IRENE KWAN-CHU: Yes, there are several employment programs that are geared toward the Asian Pacific population. The Southeast Asian refugee money that has been coming in is targeted strictly for employment related services and there's no social service available for this group; it's only towards employment. I think that's the general direction of the Federal government is to make them self sufficient and independent at the earliest stage. The JAPAN Employment program and the TAB, and the Indo-Chinese funding coming from the State are dealing with employment, specific training, and employment services.

MARIO PEREZ: Do you know if any of these funds are coming from the City?

IRENE CHU: Well it's of Labor money channeled through the City and the County of Los Angeles. But as I said, there are only three programs serving all of Los Angeles County.

ELIZABETH CLARK: The problem that you mentioned of elderly parents at home while both of their children or in-law children are both working is of course also a problem for non-immigrant families as well, and I don't expect you to have a perfect solution, but have you thought of any ways to serve those elderly who are at home and who are perhaps frail and need meal services or other sorts of help? Are there any programs that you know of or any that you have thought of developing?

IRENE KWAN-CHU: To my knowledge there's no funded program to serve the elderly and my idea to resolve some of these problems is to perhaps do more day-care. There's no Asian Pacific senior day care program available in the community. A lot of these seniors are really isolated, therefore they become more burdensome to their family, but if they have somewhere to go for socialization, recreation, peer support, then it would eliminate some of that isolation and therefore potential problem for their families.

ELIZABETH CLARK: Are there no senior citizen centers within the areas like Korean town, or...?

IRENE CHU: There are Senior Services Centers but again they deal mostly with social services not into the caring or the day care of the elderly.

MARIO PEREZ: You mentioned earlier there is no systematic measure of identifying needs of immigrants. Can you give us some suggestions of what would be good ways of probably setting up those ways to identify those needs?

IRENE KWAN-CHU: Let me back up in terms of the problem. The immigrant, again, because they don't know how to search for services, or they traditionally do not like to search or receive services until it's very very crucial -- so the statistic may be misleading -- that not that many people are seeking services, therefore it's not necessary to provide more services so that's not accurate in the first place -- that is not accurate.

There needs to be on the city level -- I recommend some type of research or documentation -- that's why I said it has to be documented, and some way of pulling out the information. And the other, I know that United Way is in the process of trying to do a needs assessment of the different Asian communities. If the city can recognize the validity of this research and base its recommendation either in services or funding for the Asian Pacific community on such a needs assessment, then that would be a start.

DIANE HIMES: I was wondering if with the isolation, the family being away from home if you have a higher incidence in the Asian populace of suicide among the elderly?

IRENE KWAN-CHU: I really don't have statistics on that. My assumption is that there is not, not because the family will for better or worse, they will take care of the parents be it that they put such burden on themselves to do it. So I don't think there is any accuracy to a thing like that.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you very much. Excellent. Professor Rosina Becerra is here. She is from the U.C.L.A. School of Social Welfare and she would like to speak to us on teen pregnancy and parenting with some emphasis particularly on Latina teen sexuality. Thank you for being here.

ROSINA BECERRA

Professor, U.C.L.A. School of Social Welfare

Teen Pregnancy and Latina Teen Sexuality

ROSINA BECERRA: Thank you. You have heard a great deal about teen pregnancy from providers of services throughout the county. What I'd like to share with you really is some work that I have been doing in research in the area of adolescent sexual behavior and mostly focused on Latina populations. I have currently been doing a large survey for the last five years of following a group of 13 to 19 year-old adolescents, looking at sexual behavior and sexual behavior outcomes. This is 1,000 adolescents chosen randomly from the county and I would like to share with you some of the things I've found, and perhaps some of ways that have been formed, programs and services, and what I have seen as the outcome of this.

I'd like to give you an overview of what we have been seeing. The adolescent birthrate among Latinas, as well as for the whole adolescent female population in Los Angeles, has increased; however there are some real distinguishing factors between Latina teens and white, non-Hispanic teenagers.

First, the Latina teen-pregnancy rate is higher and increasing faster than that of their white, non-Hispanic counterparts. The proportion of white, non-Hispanics who become sexually active in their adolescent years is almost twice that of Hispanic adolescents. I'll explain why those differences occur in just a moment. Among Latinas who do become sexually active, however, their pregnancy rate is twice that of white, non-Hispanics. So, while white adolescents may become sexually active sooner and more frequently in adolescent years, they are less likely than Hispanic teenagers to become pregnant. Then, taking the pregnancy rate, half of all of those who become pregnant, or most of those who become pregnant in the Latina population carry their children to term and result in live births. That is less true in the white, non-Hispanic population. In fact, only 2 of 3 adolescent white, non-Hispanic pregnancies result in live birth. As you can see proportionately, while Hispanic teenagers may for a variety of reasons not become sexually active early, when they do, they are very likely to become pregnant and much more likely to result in the birth of a child. So that outlines what the problem is in terms of the differences is in terms of the birthrates and why that occurs. The birthrate for Latinas is actually higher than for any other ethnic and racial group, except for the Black population.

Now, what might contribute to the differences in these pregnancy and birthrates? Some underlying differences, largely, can be contributed to culture. While premarital sexual intercourse is unacceptable in all families, it is particularly unacceptable in Latino families. Which probably contributes to the lower rate of adolescent sexual intercourse and the occurrence of a higher rate of single-partner interaction as opposed to white, non-Hispanic adolescents who are much more -- have a higher probability of multiple sex partners. This speaks to a variety of other possible health problems that may accompany multiple partners. However, when premarital sexual intercourse occurs between Hispanic adolescents, it is primarily attributed to their intention of marriage and family. Thus creating the situation where there is a greater belief that since the marriage is going to occur anyway then pregnancy occurs along with it, the children will become part of a marital unit. As we know, intentions are one thing, and actual outcomes are another.

Among the Hispanic adolescent population, marriage rates are much higher among adolescents than for any other groups. In part, this is a differential attitude of some of the male Hispanic adolescents who are more likely to accept paternity. So there is a much higher marriage rate among this group. The Latino family is very supportive. And while it is a circumstance they might not find acceptable initially, the family will, after the initial discomfort or anger, warmly welcome the new addition to the family. The family then becomes a strong unit in which the adolescent will remain with the child, or oftentimes the adolescent male also will live with the families. This creates economic problems for families as well as creating larger and more extended families. Often, the adolescents live out on their own which again is accompanied by a variety of other problems of parenting.

Parenting and parenting skills are an area that really needs to be addressed because most of these young people are uninformed about what parenting is about, and really are unprepared to take on this responsibility. So while I talk about cultural issues being one aspect of explaining the differential rates there is another which is very key and really is the central focus, I believe, where programs need to be.

For all teens, regardless of age or ethnicity, the key explanatory factor for adolescent, premarital pregnancy and higher birthrates is lack of knowledge and information about sexuality, reproduction, family planning methods, and parenting. The misinformation and the lack of any information is overwhelming. In interviewing over 1,000 adolescents 80% of them had either a great deal of misinformation or had no information whatsoever about sexuality, reproduction, and particularly about family planning methods. This was overwhelmingly true of the Latino adolescent, which really says something about where some of our resources need to be focused.

So, you think about what can be done. We've heard about some of the programming that is being done in this area. We have a progression of prevention and intervention responses to this problem. Many of our programs are geared at pregnancy prevention, which are those that are focused on groups that have never been sexually active, or those who are sexually active but never pregnant, or those which have previously been pregnant but are endeavoring to prevent additional children. The key to these programs has been the enhancing of knowledge and information and parental communication. What seems to be an issue here is the degree to which these programs are sensitive to the cultural issues accompanying working with Latinos. That is one problem that we need to look at carefully because we are dealing now with an adolescent population where there is often an acculturation gap between parents and the teenagers. But we still have a large proportion of adolescents in the Latino community who are highly Americanized and another proportion which are closer to traditional cultural values. It is that group that is closer to traditional cultural values that fall into the category of being more likely to carry until term, and to engage in early marriage.

We have programs for pregnant adolescents and these are programs that focus on adolescents that are currently pregnant and assist them in continuing their education and to finish their schooling and to provide them with prenatal, perinatal information and care, and to provide them with parenting skills which they need to raise the child.

Parenting skills is an area where there is great need and resources need to be focused. Many adolescents have a sense that they want children, that they want to provide them with all the things they never had but they really don't understand how you go about that and the general kinds of caring that really is part of parenting. I think there is oftentimes the attitude that these are like dolls, that this is not a very long term commitment to another individual. So parenting skill programs do exist for some single mothers and young couples, but these programs are few. They essentially focus on parenting techniques which range anywhere from physical care of children to psychosocial development of children. So there are a great variety of aspects of parenting that we have not really addressed. Perhaps for all of us it is hard to know exactly what are parenting skills and how do we transmit this information. So more work needs to be done in that area. We have these programs.

The question is, given a particular societal and cultural milieu which we currently live in and limited resources and political constraints, what can be done to address the issue of the high and increasing birthrate among Latina adolescents?

All the above programs can be used, and to insure this we can incorporate culturally sensitive programming and staffing. I think the key

recommendation would be to develop a widespread informational and educational network that teaches every aspect of the Latino community. This means reaching the media, church groups, schools, social organizations -- to transmit the information needed by adolescents and the message to the community of the detrimental effects to the community as a whole of losing some of our young people to early marriage, early parenting and losses of their contributions to society. So a way to go about doing that would be to develop a task force of Latinos who are well versed in Latino culture, from every aspect of the Latino community, to begin to address how we might be able to develop a extensive network of information and this information needs to come out to the community to inform them of this problem. As you know, this has been a problem particularly in developmental school-based clinics and in having the community really understand the extent of the problem and the necessity to combat it.

JAY KOHORN: I hesitate to ask a sensitive question but I'm going to ask it anyway, and that is -- Can the program you envision be supported in the Latino community in consonance with the Catholic Church?

ROSINA BECERRA: I don't have the answer. That's why, though, I think that it requires a task force of Latinos who need to address this issue of how do we go about providing this kind of knowledge and information and what mechanisms do we use. What kind of information can we broadly provide for the community that is sensitive to it as well as that can be incorporated?

NORA BALADERIAN: In terms of the Latina family, is there any change in how families prepare their teens for the onset of adolescence, sexuality -- in terms of instructing them in regard to birth control or pregnancy or other outcomes of sexual activity?

ROSINA BECERRA: Like many other families, and I found this more true in the Latina families, direct discussion around sexuality does not occur. To quote the numerous women I have interviewed, parents usually say, "Take care of yourself," and that is the message. What that may mean, means different things to different adolescents. Actual information about what to do, family planning methods and their use is not communicated.

NORA BALADERIAN: In my work with families, what I've found is that boys are taken on a long walk. They remember taking a long walk once and dad was real embarrassed. And girls remember a conversation about menstruation. That's it.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: A clarification on your sampling, if you're following 1,000 Latinas?

ROSINA BECERRA: No, it's 700 Latinas, 300 white, non-Hispanics. All girls and women, ages 13 to 19. We are now in the second phase of the interviews so that 13-year-olds are now 15-year-olds.

JAY KOHORN: It occurs to me that unlike programs presented for sex education, which the city or some government agency could help fund and participate in and help develop, what I'm hearing you say is for the Latino community, because of the unique relationship between the culture and those issues, including the religious issues, that maybe that educational support has to come more from within the community and less imposed by government from without or outside, because government can't solve those problems. Does that answer it?

ROSINA BECERRA: Well, we certainly will need some government assistance, but I think it does have to come from within the community because only there can they best address the sensitivity of the subject.

ADELE STARR: Does the gay Latino teen issue ever come up?

ROSINA BECERRA: Not in this particular study.

DUNCAN DONOVAN: I wondered if in your study you've had any input that there may be a completely different sense of reality from a Latino community that's geared to the Catholic Church and perhaps say an English background which is perhaps more geared to thinking scientifically than to thinking emotionally. And, therefore, would their sense of reality be different in terms of how they approach problems and how they become involved with another human being?

ROSINA BECERRA: I'm not clear about what you are asking.

DUNCAN DONOVAN: If the sense of reality about what a man is has a high spiritual and a high macho content, his sense of reality might be different from the sense of reality of the young man taught to think in a clear-cut scientific way -- resulting in a different sense of responsibility.

ROSINA BECERRA: That's what seems to be true. Latino males tend for a variety of cultural reasons to feel a stronger sense of responsibility for fathering than seems to be true of those outside of the culture. I would not place it as scientific vs. non-scientific, although I would say these are values and belief systems.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Very good. Thank you very much for your testimony. We appreciate your coming today. We have Mr. Byron Gross, an attorney, from the Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles.

BYRON GROSS

Legal Aid Foundation of Los Angeles

Homeless Families: The Hansen Case

BYRON GROSS: I'm one of the attorneys for plaintiffs in the lawsuit of Hansen vs. McMahan which is a class-action suit against the State of California to require the state to provide emergency shelter for homeless families. Any who have been reading the paper or watching TV in the last couple of weeks know that the city has really taken unprecedented actions just recently to deal with the problem of homelessness. We are very encouraged by that and I hope that the momentum keeps up because we're a long way from solving the problems. Let me explain first why it was necessary for us to bring this lawsuit.

Until we did this, there had been no provision by the government on a guaranteed basis for emergency housing for homeless families. Ironically the situation is different for adults. In Los Angeles County, a single adult can walk into any welfare office, on any day, even if he has no identification and he is guaranteed to be given a hotel voucher for that night so he can get shelter for the night. This is a result of previous litigation that we did, and of course there are still lots of people homeless in the streets and there are a lot of reasons for that which are long and for separate discussion, but people are entitled to that right and they will be kept in a hotel room until their case is processed and they start getting general relief payments. The same situation is not true for families.

Families cannot get general relief. Their support comes from the AFDC Program, the Aid to Families with Dependent Children, and what they get on emergency basis is not shelter, but \$100. And that \$100 has to last until their case is processed which can take up to several weeks. Now \$100 doesn't go very far towards providing someone shelter; in fact it's maybe three nights in a hotel even on skid row or a Motel 6 somewhere. And the family is stuck. For families who are already on welfare who often become homeless also even if they are getting welfare payments, there is some special money provided by the welfare program. However until recently, the county and state were taking a very narrow interpretation of that and they would only give it to people if their housing was destroyed in a catastrophe. So that if your house burned down, you could get this extra money; but if your grandmother died and you were living with your grandmother and you were kicked out of the house you couldn't get anything, or if you were a battered woman and you had to flee your husband, you couldn't get anything.

The AFDC Program, of course, is the province in L.A. of the Department of Public Social Services. We also have the Department of Children's Services, and they're charged by law to give preventative services to prevent the breakup of families. One of the things they could do is give emergency shelter. But they don't do that. They don't deal with families per se; they only take children away from families in cases of abuse or extreme neglect and so they haven't been any help. In some counties, there were situations where families were actually giving up their children in order to get them shelter because that was the only way to get shelter from the County, but if they gave up the children, the children could be put in foster homes, the parents could go into a shelter.

Anyway, this was a serious problem and we've done a lot of work dealing with homeless individuals and we decided it was time to turn our attention to families. So we looked at the State Child Welfare Services Act and it seemed very clear to us the Act said this applies to all children including homeless children. It said that emergency shelter shall be provided if necessary, and it said one of the primary goals of the Act was to keep families together whenever possible. So we put those things together and said clearly this Act requires the state, through the counties to provide emergency shelter. So we filed our lawsuit last spring and we were successful in getting an injunction from Judge Dowds in Superior Court. He said that the State's regulations were too restrictive, that they couldn't give emergency shelter just to children, and not to children with their families because the law didn't say that. So we got an injunction, and then the state refused to follow the injunction so then we went back into court on a contempt proceeding and Judge Dowds sent the case away. He decided not to hear it and we were very discouraged. He sent it to Judge Cole who is not the most liberal judge in the Court. Judge Cole looked at the case, and again he was the second judge to hear the case -- he said this is absolutely clear, there is nothing here in this statute that restricts this only to children, taken from their families. So Judge Cole held the Department in contempt and the Department, in response to that sent out a memo to the county saying that you can't enforce this illegal regulation. But that's really all they told the counties. This is very discouraging, because you would think after two judges that looked at this and said this is clear, you would think after knowing how serious the problem is and how everyone recognizes it is serious, they would say - Hey, we'd better get our act together and start planning to do this. They haven't done that. What they've done is appealed the case. They are waiting for the case to be heard in the Court of Appeal and they are basically doing nothing in the meantime. So that's where we are with our lawsuit. They've told the counties to comply but they haven't given the counties any direction and they haven't given the counties any money. So we're fighting on an individual basis with the counties.

I don't think I need to convince you that there's a problem out there because you've all seen it on the television, but let me just tell you about my personal experience with this. Frankly, when we first started working on this I was a little skeptical because -- it wasn't that I didn't believe there was a problem out there, but -- I personally hadn't really seen the problem. I work in a legal aid office near downtown and we have streams of homeless adults come into our office every day and previous litigation I've worked on when we wanted to interview people you could go down to the soup lines on skid row and there's people lined around the block -- 200, 300 homeless people. Plenty of people to talk to, the problem is very visible. The same thing is not true with families. I'd seen one or two now and then but there were not people that would come into our office, there were not people that you saw out on the streets. They were much more hidden. Partly because they're not congregated on skid row in the same way. It's not a place where families wanted to be, partly because families often hide themselves, don't present themselves to the system because they are afraid that their children will be taken away from them. This is an enormous fear for a lot of families. We started working on our lawsuit despite my skepticism and it was difficult. We had some clients but we wanted to interview more people and present their stories to the court and it was difficult to find homeless families. We ended up finding a lot of people in shelters. We found people who had been homeless in previous weeks and had found their way to shelters and that's where we were able to get to them and get to their stories, which were quite moving.

What we've been doing recently in response to the lawsuit, I've been very concerned about whether the county is following the lawsuit and so we have not hooked up to Info-Line which is the county's referral system. All the homeless families they can't place in shelters, they've been referring a lot of them to us and we've been doing on the average of about one per day. The county is trying to prevent another confrontation in court, so basically what they're doing is they are coming up with money for people. They're either processing the welfare case immediately, or they've liberalized the requirements for this extra money.

Let me explain the situation when the homeless families contact our law office. They'd be in the office, they'd be on the phone, they'd be in the car and I didn't know where they were going to sleep that night and I knew it would take me days of arguing with county officials to get them some money, and we might scrounge around and get some charity to give them a hotel voucher for one night. It was very stressful. Now I know I can just call the Welfare Department, they'll say, "O.K., send them over; we'll give them \$250." So in the short run, it's been much better for the families that we've been dealing with, but of course there are a lot of families out there that aren't getting to us and in the long run they need to set up some sort of system to really deal with this.

What I've learned from doing this recently is that there are a lot of families out there. Clearly, I've seen a lot of them. The shelters for families are always full. It's impossible to get families into shelters, there just are not enough shelter beds for families. Some of them won't take families with teenage boys. If we can, if we can get emergency shelter, we can clear up, get a guarantee, that in three weeks they might have a bed for a family. It's far into the future. The short-term housing is very expensive. The hotels are incredibly expensive. It's not an efficient way to deal with the problem. We get them this extra money and it's used up in a couple weeks, and the transition to long-term housing is expensive because people have to pay security deposits, sometimes they have no furniture or anything and their welfare grants just don't give them enough to be able to do that.

Finally, I've found that people need an enormous amount of back up social services. Getting them the money for the housing is not enough and that's really all we've been able to do and that's very frustrating because people have to weave their way through the system. They have to get their children back into school and then the children don't have their inoculate and they have to get records from other counties and they have to get into the Welfare system and all the time they're worried about their children, trying to take care of them, they have to find housing and furniture. They really need someone to guide them through the system.

In regard to what the city can do, unfortunately I can't say what Virginia Uribe said, that these things don't take money. This area needs a lot of money. They need more shelters, because even though they are a short term solution they are really needed. Families need to be in a shelter for a couple of months until they can save up enough money to find housing, get their bearings again after the stress of being on the streets and be ready to deal with the other problems in their life. They need money for security deposits. Sometimes there's federal money, but it's very sporadic. One possibility is to set up some kind of revolving fund and loan the money to families for the security deposits. They can pay it back gradually out of their wages or welfare checks and the fund could be replenished. They need some program for case workers that can be hooked up with these families to guide them through the system because the Department of Children's Services does not do that at all. They go and look at the family. If they think the children are abused, they'll take the children away. If they don't think the children are abused, they won't do anything for these families. That's the Department that I think should be doing this. For whatever reason, they are not and I think this is going to have to come from somewhere else.

Also, there are going to be a number of bills presented to the Legislature. I have some written testimony -- some things that will come up that the city should put their weight behind -- welfare bills and housing

bills for some longer term strategies for increasing housing for low-income people.

CELIA MATA: You said that prior to the Hansen litigation the policy of the City and County of Los Angeles has been to remove children from the families who are homeless in order for the families to receive shelter. Now with this Hansen case in question, have these policies or practices changed in any way and are these results or changes -- are they temporary?

BYRON GROSS: Frankly it's difficult to say whether that's definitely the policy or not because what the county's position is, what they've told me when I took the deposition of the Department of Children's Services is that they won't let families give up their children. They don't have a voluntary program. Other counties definitely have that. Apparently Los Angeles used to and they say they don't have it anymore. They say they only take the kids away if there's abuse, but we believe there are lots of situations where it's more really an economic situation -- the family's in a car, the children are neglected. There's no per se bad acting on the part of the parents, it's just the situation. We believe there are situations like that where the kids are taken away. It's difficult to say because often other reasons will be put down in the Children's Services reports when the children are taken so without really investigating those cases it's hard to say how many times that was done. The situation will change. There was a bill in the Legislature that took effect January 1, 1987, that said that children could no longer be removed from their families just because they were homeless so on the books now it would be illegal for the Department of Children's Services or the departments in any other counties to do that.

CELIA MATA: Is there any current method for matching homeless families with available programs, funds, and services? And if not, what method would you suggest?

BYRON GROSS: The only method now is the county's Info-Line which I think is a pretty good program. Especially since just recently when I've been networking with them I've been pretty impressed with the way they've been working. I think in 1985 they gave about 18,000 referrals to emergency shelter and last year about 23,000 or something. They only provide referrals over the telephone and they will do some phone work to call around to different shelters or food pantries to find out whether there's free food. But there's no one now that will actually, once that beginning part is done, to go out and see the family and really intervene in the social work. There isn't anyone now and I think that's what should be developed.

CELIA MATA: Would you happen to know if there are any outreach programs that actually go and seek out these homeless families? You did mention that there is an Info-Line. Knowing homeless families don't have access to a telephone or media -- are there any programs?

BYRON GROSS: There aren't any outreach programs, there haven't been. One of the things that the Board of Supervisors did last week during the cold snap was tell some of their workers, or they said they were going to, I think it was Edelman's motion before the Board probably in response to the city taking action. There was some pressure on the Board of Supervisors to take some action so they said they were going to send some people out to look for homeless people and give them hotel vouchers but they gave out only 25 the first day and they were in the back of the shelter in Little Tokyo that was opened and it took them about 4 employees in 6 hours to give out 25 vouchers and they were only giving them vouchers for one night and then referring them to the Welfare Department the next day. They weren't looking for families, just the single adults downtown.

JAY KOHORN: Would you comment on two things. Number one, you've talked mainly about the county as the Department. What's the relationship between the county and the city, and what's the relationship between the city and the problem? Number two is, giving money for a few days to get settled is -- makes me nervous because it sounds like it could easily be a revolving door type of situation. I wonder if anyone to your knowledge is looking at this in a more holistic approach, meaning employment and entitlements, and the whole picture as opposed to simply focusing on the housing which it seems to me is just a stopgap measure.

BYRON GROSS: O.K. Your first question. It's the county that has the legal responsibility to support its indigent residents. Under state law the counties are mandated to do that so it's ultimately their responsibility and that's why the counties run the welfare programs. The city does not have that responsibility. The city has been involved. They've funded different shelter programs, food programs, and other things and I think to the extent it's their funds, it's their responsibility to deal with this problem. It's always been primarily the county's problem. Unfortunately, our county government does not see that as their first priority and neither does our state government. So to the extent the City Council is willing to do something, there is room for them to take the lead.

JAY KOHORN: So what I hear you saying is that sometimes the city has to step in when the county shirks its responsibility.

BYRON GROSS: Right. And there's always going to be holes in whatever programs are set up by the county and state so I think there's room for the city to complement what they're doing. In regard to your second question, obviously one thing is housing. I'm not real familiar with the housing stuff but there are people working on different housing bills like rehabilitation of boarded-up housing by nonprofits so they can create low-income housing stock that will stay permanently low income or other more long-term shelters that families can be put in analogous to Transition House, which is a place down on skid row for adults where they can stay for

90 days, get services, get hooked up with job training and get other things that can really get them back into society but that's very costly to do those things. To some extent families have to be sheltered before anything else can be done. They can't really benefit from other services until they have shelter.

THOMAS FRANK COLEMAN: Is it possible, or too late for the City Attorney's Office to file a friend-of-the-court brief in the Court of Appeal in the Hansen case?

BYRON GROSS: I think that would be terrific. I just don't know the timing since the brief is complete. But we could talk about that. Another part of the team is working on the appeal and I could link you up with that.

THOMAS FRANK COLEMAN: It sounds like something that may be headed for the Supreme Court of California. Since the city does have maybe the moral responsibility if not the legal responsibility, the city might be in the position to make some type of statements on behalf of its homeless residents.

JAY KOHORN: And the timing -- the Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court may waive all the timing requirements when the government entering as an advocate? amicus? They even allow filing of amicus briefs after all arguments sometimes.

ADELE STARR: I may have missed it, but at what rate are the numbers of homeless families increasing? We hear 30,000, 32,000 coming out of nowhere and I'm wondering do we know how many more families become homeless each day before we can even help them?

BYRON GROSS: I can't quote you definite figures. I can tell you what I read in the Los Angeles Times. There were statistics that were from the National Conference of Mayors that was held recently and it said there was a 30% increase in Los Angeles in requests for emergency by families with children in 1986. I understand one of the bills that is going to be proposed in Sacramento this year is to set up some sort of clearing house and data-gathering mechanism so that government can get a better handle on what the extent of the problem is because so many different figures are thrown around.

ADELE STARR: How long do the families remain homeless?

BYRON GROSS: Homelessness depends on how you define it. Some people are on the street for a few days and then they might find someone that will take them in, they sleep on someone's floor for a week until that person's landlord kicks them out and then they borrow money for a motel for a couple of nights. So there are a lot of people who bounce around for awhile.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: There are a number of studies which seem to indicate that the stereotypical profile of homeless people is very accurate. For example, one particular demographic feature that seems to recur is -- in the last 3 or 4 years the numbers of people have increased. There is a stereotype of people who are in an indigent situation for years. These are frequently people who are displaced, came from colder areas and come here; there's also a dispersion from the historic point of entry.

ADELE STARR: What I'm trying to understand is this -- the numbers keep increasing -- are we helping the families who were there first and others are being added to it and it keeps increasing without really helping those who are homeless?

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: I'm not even sure that there are accurate figures about homeless individuals, much less homeless families.

BYRON GROSS: There are not. And we weren't really helping them before at all so it's not like we were helping them and then nothing's happening. We haven't been helping them. But I think what you're saying is right; with all the shutdowns in industry in the midwest, it's created a lot of people who are floating around the country.

PAULA STARR: You are only dealing with United States citizens, right? You're not dealing with undocumented?

BYRON GROSS: No, that's not true. The Child Welfare Services Act says nothing about alienage. In fact there are lots of undocumented children in the foster care system. There is no requirement on alienage. So it is our position that the state and the county have the same obligation to provide emergency shelter for undocumented people. However we have not pressed this yet. One step at a time. Of course, we're doing our lawsuit and the people we emphasize are not undocumented people. If we can establish their right to shelter and get a system set up, then the next step would be the undocumented. When you are presenting something like this to the court all they have to start thinking about is what am I opening up. So under the Welfare program, yes, you have to be a citizen, or you have to have certain alienage requirements to be a permanent resident or certain other people can get it. A lot of families are undocumented but their children are citizens because the children were born here. So those families can get welfare. They just get it for a lower number of persons.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you very much, Byron. It's an important case and it's a very interesting one for us to follow. Moving along on our agenda, Susan Kerr is with us this afternoon from Adult Protective Services, Department of Public Social Services, County of Los Angeles. Her topic is elder abuse.

SUSAN KERR

D.P.S.S., Adult Protective Services

Programs Dealing With Elder Abuse

SUSAN KERR: I want to thank you for inviting me to testify today. Our Department has been working over the last fifteen months with four other Departments in the County, Department of Community and Senior Services, Department of Health Services, Department of Mental Health, and the Public Administrative-Public Guardian -- to work in the area of elder abuse. I'm going to share with you today some information about the activities that we've been pursuing over those last fifteen months.

First, I'd like to give a very brief overview of elder abuse. I passed out the brochure we developed which does give an overview of elder abuse and is the brochure we developed for the general public to disseminate some information.

Elder abuse is defined under state law as the abuse of an individual 65 or older. The definition of "elder" varies throughout the country, but in this state it's considered 65 and older. There are four main forms of abuse. There's physical abuse, which is beating, slapping, kicking, that kind of direct brutality. There's financial exploitation, which involves the mismanagement of an elder's money or the theft of their property. There's mental abuse, which can be things like verbal harassment, threats, intimidation; quite often it's things like threatening them with institutionalization if they don't shape up. Then there's neglect. Neglect is the failure to provide the elder with basic necessities of life, such as shelter, food, medical care, etc. Neglect can either be afflicted by another or self neglect.

According to a 1984 survey that was conducted by the State Department of Social Services, a typical elderly victim in this county is a 79-year-old white female who lives in suburbia with her family and is being abused by her child. In some cases it's a spouse, but generally it's a child that's doing the abusing. The abuse is taking place on a daily basis, generally. Stress has been identified as the key factor in incidents of abuse and the state is going to be conducting an even more comprehensive characteristic survey of the cases that we take in next month and we hope to glean a lot more information from that particular study.

It's true that elder abuse is the new focus. Originally it was child abuse, then it became spouse abuse and in the 80's there's more focus on elder abuse. A lot of research needs to be done. The statistics are not there. It's tremendously underreported and we're still in the beginning stages of discovering what the problem is.

In response to the identification of this problem, Supervisor Antonovich held a public hearing on October 30th of 1985. There was testimony from 38 individuals who represented the entire spectrum of senior citizens groups -- health and medical professionals, social workers and law enforcement. The testimony at that hearing showed some trends. One thing pointed out consistently was a need for improved coordination and communication between those agencies who deal with abused elders. There was also a need expressed for public education and awareness about elder abuse. A third most commonly mentioned need was prevention programs which would include such things as respite care, support groups for caregivers, volunteer services, and legislative changes.

As a result of that particular hearing, the Board of Supervisors adopted a Board order on November 19, 1985. This Board order called for several actions to be taken in regard to elder abuse. They included the development of a comprehensive public education and awareness program, the development of a toll-free hotline, a plan for the more effective use of volunteers to combat elder abuse, the development and implementation of a pilot project to serve as a program model providing better coordination, linkages and integration of services for at-risk elders, and finally the formation of a county Task Force to study and make recommendations for a long range plan on services for the at-risk and abused elders.

I want to talk briefly about what was done in each of those areas. First I'll talk about the public education and awareness program. We developed an implementation plan which has gone into effect; we haven't finished it, but we've started. The components of our program include brochures, educational materials for care givers, a media campaign, a speakers bureau, and billboards. As you can see we've got our poster done to advertise our hotline. We've got our first brochure out for the general public and that has been fairly widely disseminated. We will be developing a second brochure which is aimed at the mandated reporter. There is a mandatory elder abuse reporting law which has recently been combined in AB 3988 with a dependent abuse-reporting law. They're under the same piece of legislation now. So we're going to be developing a brochure to deal with those particular areas. We are developing, and we'll have it ready probably sometime next month a caregivers handbook. This is a handbook which discusses problems of the elderly, of the aging process, gives some helpful hints to caregivers on how to deal with the every day stress of caregiving and what I feel is the most beneficial thing is that it has a generic resource description. It discusses the kinds of resources that

are available in the community that most people don't even know about. So it gives the generic description of each of the particular resources like adult day health care, respite programs. My department is the In-Home Supportive Services Program, etc., and then it has a listing of information referral numbers that you can call to get linked to the appropriate programs. I'm really excited about that particular part of our campaign.

We've also submitted public service announcements to radio and television stations. I haven't heard a lot of them aired, but I did go to a Southern California Broadcasters Association meeting and there were hundreds of other people who had been submitting their PSA's so I do understand the crunch that the stations are under. But we have heard of few of them advertising our brochure. We are currently developing a video campaign, to advertise the hotline, which should be out to the stations in the next month or two.

We'll be putting up billboards with this picture on it to advertise the hotline, and we do have a speakers bureau currently in effect to have speakers go out and speak to public and private agencies about elder abuse.

In terms of the hotline, the hotline was developed and operation began on August 19, 1986. The phone number is on the poster: 1-800-992-1660. We contracted with a private information referral service to maintain a 24-hour free hotline. The features include two separate telephone lines. The information referral service has other lines for information and referral. We now have separate lines dealing solely with elder abuse hotline calls so they're answered on a priority basis and that phone rings independently. There is also a DPSS social worker involved and available 24 hours a day. This is a new concept to our program. It used to be that our social workers were only available during regular working hours. We now have an after-hours telephone response team composed of volunteers who have volunteered to be on call after hours to accept referrals from the elder abuse hotline. Basically, the elder abuse hotline works -- the hotline specialist gets the call, screens the call, and determines what the most appropriate course of action would be. Calls that are received during regular work hours are immediately referred to the appropriate Adult Protective Services office. Calls that come in after regular working hours are screened and if they involve something that can wait until the next regular working day the referral is made on that basis. If it's a call that needs to be dealt with immediately, it is immediately linked to a social worker who will handle the call. Calls which require emergency services such as law enforcement, paramedics, or the PET team are linked immediately to the 911 number. After that particular aspect is taken care of then an APS referral is made for follow up. Some of the specific services -- activities that our APS workers provide for hotline callers -- are counseling, accepting reports of elder abuse and neglect, advocating on behalf of the client in situations where he cannot effectively act on his own behalf, and making cross-reports of physical abuse to law enforcement.

The third aspect of the Board order was volunteers. We worked closely with the Department of Community and Senior Citizens Services on that aspect. They have created a speakers bureau composed of volunteers, many of whom are retired county employees or city employees who have expressed an interest in going out to the community and talking about elder abuse. They've received training from our agency on the topic and they are available to go out and speak to any organization that would like to hear from them. DPSS also has a senior companion program that is established. They have been very successful in recruiting volunteers to go out and act as companions for isolated senior citizens.

A fourth component is the pilot project. It is called the ASSIST Pilot Project. ASSIST is an acronym for the Adult and Senior Services Inter-agency Support Team. This was created in response to a 1984-85 Grand Jury report which called for a team to be set up to look at coordination among the various agencies dealing with adult services. The pilot project was established in the Glendale area as a pilot. It went into operation in May of 1986 and its objectives are to insure maximum accessibility of services to the at risk and abused elders and to serve as a clearinghouse for referrals, and finally, the coordination of county departments and community resources to facilitate the delivery of services to at risk and abused elders. The referrals are received from a variety of sources. They come from the participating departments, from the elder abuse hotline, and from local agencies who are familiar with the program. So we're monitoring that pilot project with an eye toward extending into other areas of the county at some point.

Finally, there's the county task force which convened. It's made up of representatives from each of the five county departments that I mentioned, representatives nominated by each of the Supervisors to represent senior groups, and finally representatives from the USC and UCLA Schools of Social Welfare. They submitted their final report on June 2nd of last year. I've given a copy of their final report to your task force.

In their final report, they discuss some of their findings and make recommendations. They made 16 recommendations. I'm not going to take the time to go into them, as you have the material available to you. One of their major findings was that any response system has to be capable of intervening in a variety of ways because elder abuse does involve different kinds of abuse. It needs to provide such services as counseling, physical and mental assessment, respite for caregivers, and access to various long-term care services, as well as prosecution of verified abusers. Their recommendations include (and this is just a very brief summary of the 16) the development of legislative proposals to provide for more consistent and steady funding to cope with the problem and to encourage local input and control into the planning of state and federal programs that do impact upon the at-risk and abused elders. They also recommended the implementation

of a public education and awareness program which we already had in focus. But that's certainly a need that could be handled by any number of agencies or groups. Thirdly, they recommended the use of senior citizens groups to disseminate information. They also recommended the development of a plan to provide for long term case management services to at risk elders throughout Los Angeles County, and, finally, the recommendation for the development of a master plan for the local coordination of adult services throughout Los Angeles County.

Their findings deal basically with the need for coordination of services among community agencies, which would certainly impact upon the city. In terms of prosecution, it would impact upon the City Attorney's Office. I'm currently involved with liaising with L.A.P.D. to try and set up some kind of effective networking in the area of elder abuse. And then the public education is always a great need.

LISA PORCHE-BURKE: The city as of today has no inter-agency task force on elder abuse?

SUSAN KERR: There are a number of task forces that have been created within this county and the interesting thing to me is that some of them don't know about each other. I suspect that they don't now but there is a San Gabriel Valley Task Force which has representation from a number of agencies including city agencies. There is also an elder abuse and dependent adult Task Force that's being staffed by the Department of Community and Senior Citizens Services and has the area agency on aging involvement which would include the city. The Domestic Violence Council, of which I'm a member, is also looking into elder abuse and it does have the cross-city and county representation as well as private representation. So, yes, there are a number of groups that are looking into it, but it's probably more a matter of effectively networking within those groups to make sure that they're not duplicating their efforts and that everybody can focus on a particular area.

LISA PORCHE-BURKE: What has been the response of the Los Angeles Police Department?

SUSAN KERR: The Los Angeles Police Department has indicated that they are interested in developing programs to deal with elder abuse. They have been wonderful in the area of spouse abuse, some of it in response to lawsuits, but some of it just in terms of the general responsiveness of the Agency and that particular goodwill seems to spill over into the area of elder abuse. They've been very accessible.

LISA PORCHE-BURKE: If you were to make some type of recommendation with regard to the Los Angeles Police Department what would that be?

SUSAN KERR: At this particular point, because the research is so sketchy -- and we're not really aware of the problem in the full totality of it -- the main thing right now is the public education and awareness -- to get the word out to the community that this is elder abuse and this is what you can do. You can call the hotline and you will get a response so that we can get some feel for the extent of the problem, but certainly law enforcement would need to be responsive in terms of responding to calls about elder abuse, intervening in terms of taking the abuser away -- whatever they need to do. I would expect that will follow in the same path as what they've done with battered women. There's tremendous need for additional resources. Stress is, to my mind, the main cause of much of the elder abuse that occurs. Particularly respite care programs to give the caregiver some kind of relief from that 24-hour, 7-day-a-week involvement with that particular frail elder. Anybody is going to crack after a certain period of time if they are never free to leave the house, to do anything themselves. My own pet is respite care. Adult day health care can serve that purpose by allowing the elder person to go into that care. We do have an I.H.S.S. program, an In-Home Supportive Services Program which is funded through the state and federal government and you can get services for frail elders or even for disabled individuals if they're SSI-eligible, meet the requirements except for the income. That particular program is available and also is available for respite care to a mild degree.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: There seems to be a need for better articulation of information between County and the City Department of Aging, even as specifically as the abuse hotline, even though as these are new programs. Even in the last 30 days we have spoken to people in the City Department who are not aware that there was a program already developed, let alone about to come on line. It seems like those two principal agencies among these many kinds of inter-agencies ought to be informed and that will be a question as we come to that specific department. The Council will be asking, I'm sure, well what is their response, how closely they're working with you I guess there needs to be some coming together there. Second, is on the L.A.P.D. There are a number of reports and suggestions from people that some of us have spoken to that simply calling the Police Department to report a suspected abuse of an elder, a next-door neighbor or something leads to suggestions like, "Well, have you spoken directly with this person?" -- "Have you asked the primary caregiver whether they're beating up on the grandfather or grandmother?" -- things that are not likely for most folks to do -- intervening in your neighbor's problem. So the referral question is the specific one, the hotline. But the issue is where is an available shelter or shelters and some training for those policing agencies? If there is an interest in working cooperatively from the L.A.P.D. on this issue it still seems to me that it falls into the area of another taboo family subject that policing agencies don't really want to get involved in. So it may not be the responsibility of your department to do that training, but we may be able to make a recommendation of some kind.

SUSAN KERR: Right. And when I said that it seemed to be following the path of the domestic violence, the battered spouse thing, the police department does have an intensive training program in that area and my own feeling is that this would follow logically from that, they would then extend it into the elder abuse area. That certainly is the focus of the Domestic Violence Council and any impetus from your Task Force would certainly be of assistance.

The area of shelters is something I should mention. There was a bill passed through the state legislature, AB 57, which called for a demonstration project to be set up for shelters for abused elders and this county was given one of the grants to set up that particular kind of program. It's not a vast program at this point. We have three beds in the county to deal with abused elders, but it is a start. Every bed is better than none. So we do have available -- and this can be linked through the hotline because those kinds of referrals go through the hotline to our after hours response team, and to our regular staff during regular work hours -- and they are definitely aware of the availability of those beds and they do have the capability of sheltering an abused elder.

THOMAS FRANK COLEMAN: This comes out of a student paper on elder abuse where the student contacted a number of agencies including the L.A.P.D., the City Attorney's Office in their City Attorney Hearing Section as well as the prosecutors and the Domestic Violence Unit and so on. It appeared that there was no coordinated effort in the city dealing specifically with elder abuse and that no one was keeping statistics. Cases get handed from one prosecutor to another, not the way child-abuse cases are handled, vertically. There was no specific training in the City Attorney's Office or the L.A.P.D. on elder abuse and there was no way of tracking misdemeanor referrals within the city which are within the City Attorney's jurisdiction to prosecute, not the District Attorney's jurisdiction.

When your office contacts the D.A.'s office -- do they in fact refer to the city attorney's office or the L.A.P.D.? If they refer to the L.A.P.D. it may go to the City Attorney Hearing Section and then do they refer for prosecution or drop it?

What we found from a student paper was that agencies are not coordinating their efforts. The suggestion has come up, and I'd like your response to this -- whether you feel it would be helpful to have possibly the City Attorney's office convene a 10-member task force for a 6-month period of time, a short-term task force under the city's jurisdiction where the city takes a look at its responsibilities and its connection with others and how it could improve in coordination. Would that be something that would be helpful or do you think that would be duplicating what's going on or what?

SUSAN KERR: Any efforts to improve coordination are going to be helpful. It is my understanding that the City Attorney recently got a grant for a special unit on domestic violence, and to my mind, elder abuse is a component of domestic violence so I would certainly think that that would be an area that that particular unit could focus on. In fact I know they got the grant because the woman who is heading it comes to the Domestic Violence Council. So that would probably be an appropriate liaison point for anything dealing with elder abuse.

Elder abuse is now at the beginning stages of what happened with child abuse before it was exhaustively studied and people gave a lot of attention to it. We're just in the very beginning stages and because I'm basically an optimistic individual, I expect things to follow basically the same path that those two particular things did, and that we will develop the same kinds of programs and efforts that were developed for those two areas. But anything that will improve coordination and networking is going to be a valuable service.

ELAINE SIEGEL: Since the start of the hotline, how frequently is it used and who are the people using it primarily -- or is there any particular group?

SUSAN KERR: I just got my first report on the hotline which kind of astonished me since it did go into effect five months ago. We're not getting a tremendous volume of calls because it's not known. If you're telling me the City Department of Aging doesn't know about it -- and they should because I go to meetings with them and I know it's been mentioned to certain individuals who work there -- so if they're not communicating it upward there is certainly a serious problem. We have sent the posters out to each city within the county of Los Angeles, to the City Library, to all of the city departments. We had a cover letter explaining what it was and talking about the hotline, so we've at least made that attempt to get the word out. The billboards should go out soon. I don't know how effective a billboard is going to be. I think when the video PSA's -- when they go up -- if no one knows it exists it's not going to be very effective. I don't know how many of you have dealt with bureaucracy but it's little things like getting it listed with 411 which is a time consuming problem. I've had people call me up and say, "I've called 411 asking what's the number of the elder abuse hotline and they didn't know about it." That all takes time. And once we get the word out to the community about the availability and the number is well known and well published, then I expect more calls to come in. What I've noticed at this particular point is that we're getting calls from interested neighbors, etc. reporting cases. But we are set up to deal with calls from the abusers, counseling to the abusers, counseling to the victims, etc., and accepting the mandated reports. I have found in going around through the county and talking about the elder abuse reporting law. that law has been in effect now for three years and there are a number

of mandated reporters that don't know about it. Again, education is a tremendous key to any effort that's going to improve the situation. It's all just building on top of other efforts that are being made.

ELAINE SIEGEL: Another question has to do with financial abuse. That was given second billing. I'm wondering how that is dealt with and how you are even aware of that unless the victim reports that and very often they're intimidated, embarrassed, threatened.

SUSAN KERR: Relatives or neighbors will call and report it and a plus right now is that we have just talked to the Public Administrator-Public Guardian about prioritizing the referrals that we make to them. They are unable to accept the vast majority of referrals they get because of constraints about the number of employees, etc., etc. They have agreed to give top priority to referrals we make dealing with financial exploitation, so that's going to be a definite improvement in the system. We do get calls from concerned people. A son will call and say I think my brother is stealing my mother's money. Or a neighbor will call up and notice the bills aren't being paid or whatever.

JEFF VOPAL: In what languages are your services provided -- particularly your hotline and your information line?

SUSAN KERR: Right now, English and Spanish immediately, but the information service does have the capability of getting interpreters for several other languages. They have a referral system because they use them for their regular information services, so you can get translation in various languages.

JEFF VOPAL: Secondly, what can you do legally in the case of self neglect?

SUSAN KERR: Our Adult Protective Services workers are under tremendous constraints legally. We don't have any legal authority to go in and force our services on anybody. That's one of the things that was addressed in a County Task Force recommendation with an effort toward beefing up the legal authority of the Adult Protective Services workers. It's tremendously frustrating when they go out there and they really want to do their job and they'll go out to this victim to offer services and the victim will say no. If the victim is not mentally incompetent, they must accept the no and leave. If they are found mentally incompetent and incapable of making that kind of determination then we call in the PET team, Public Guardian, etc. and we can take some effective action. But in terms of legal authority we basically have none.

NORA BALADERIAN: Where is the construction of the shelters that you are planning?

SUSAN KERR: They're in board and care homes. The beds are already available, but not for long term. It's supposed to be a five-day maximum although there is flexibility built in. If you can't make another plan within those five days you can extend it on for other days, but it really is geared to short term program so that it can work for more people. You can't be using up the beds for the same person for six months and be letting others sleep on the street. That gives the social worker enough time to find alternate resources.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you very much, Susan. Our next witness is Barbara Rosenkrantz who has patiently waited for her turn to address us. She comes to us as the parent of a gay son to speak experientially and also as a member of the Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, a subject that is close to the heart of certain members of our Task Force if not all. We're delighted, Barbara, that you're here.

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ

Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays

A Personal Experience and the Need for Education

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ: My name is Barbara Rosenkrantz, I'm here to speak to you about the effect that ignorance has had upon the history of two families and to demonstrate how community education could have easily saved the life of a young man.

When my father died 20 years ago, more than anything I wanted a child to carry his name. Robbie was born in 1967 with beautiful, large, intelligent eyes, and a sensitivity to the world around him that would have made his grandfather very proud. We loved him very much and we still do.

By the time Robert reached 13, he had strong feelings of being different from the children around him. With two brothers in the house, he decided to withdraw to his room, feeling that they would guess his secret. As time went on, the secret became the focus of his adolescent life. He was homosexual. It seemed to Robert that everything that he saw on television concerning gays, every disgusting gay joke, every experience that he had in his life contributed to his feelings of isolation and loneliness. After school, Rob sat in his room by himself for weeks and then months. People said to me, "He'll grow out of it, they're all that way."

One day when at last he began to develop the courage to be with friends after so many years of self-imposed isolation -- graduation night from high school -- my 17-year-old son, Joey, and his best friend, Steve, exposed Robert's homosexuality so harshly, so painfully, that Robert begged his brother and Steven to rescind their expose, to save the family's unity.

Robert, my child who used to bring home orphan birds as a little boy, who wished to become a lawyer like his father and his grandfather before him, shot and killed his friend Steven in his rage at a world that he feared would only see him as a faggot; not as a human being.

The subsequent trial and continuing incarceration are very fresh in my mind. His pain is my pain, his prison cell my own. But the one thing that saved my whole family from self destruction was the kindness, love, and patient education given to Robert and the rest of my family by the gay community. And by parents and friends who gently guided us through our confusion and ignorance.

Robbie told me when I visited him in prison that had he found even one book, one book in his school library that reassured him that he was normal, that he would have had the strength to ride out the inevitable storm when my husband and I were told of his sexual preferences. I had no doubt that had Joey and Steven understood through an educational process that Robert was not a freak, that the horror and anguish that followed could have been avoided.

If you believe in your heart that we are the exceptional family in today's society, then look again. One in 10 children is gay. Robert has received thousands, literally thousands of letters from adolescents, adults, and heads of families who are crying out for release.

I learned of organizations that existed after this, but it was late for us. We didn't know. We who sit smugly in our homes forget about the stresses that come about in adolescent years -- where every event seems like life or death. But the cries of our youth for love and for acceptance into the human family must be addressed sooner or later. Ignoring these children is the same as throwing them out in the trash. This is a tragic and unnecessary waste of lives, of resources. A grievous loss to parents, brothers, sisters, and the community at large. We cannot bring the many children back to life who have committed suicide, or who have been beaten or killed in the name of morality. But perhaps the lesson of the loss of Steven Redman and my son Robert Rosenkrantz will help bring about strong programs to educate parents, teachers, and students in our high schools so that the next generation of adolescents needn't cry alone. Thank you.

DIANE HIMES: I just want to say I realize this must have been difficult for you and I think this testimony is very important.

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ: I think it's very important too and I'm pleased that I was asked.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: I have to say that it was very moving, and I know that you have made a number of presentations and I know it's very difficult and we are appreciative that you were willing to come forward and talk to us as well.

DIANE HIMES: I wonder if you have made any outreach or have written Bill Honig, the Supervisor of Schools. He is in the midst of trying to keep a homosexual neutral wording in material coming down to the schools. He's suffering a tremendous attack right now. If there is any way I can assist you in carrying that message to him or whatever, or I could represent you, or if you wish to talk, I'm on the Task Force representing gay and lesbian couples, and if there's any way I could help, certainly, I'll give you my card.

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ: That would be very nice. I'd be happy to. I don't think that I really had the strength up until quite recently to do any sort of public speaking or political advocacy of any kind because we're just reeling from the pain of the event and the publicity has been horrendous. My husband particularly has been in terrible pain, in addition to my other children. We've really tried to keep a low profile.

DIANE HIMES: The only reason I would ask you to even participate in the political basis at this point is the state is in the process of making a decision which is what you're pleading for. And that is the issue, homosexual neutral literature, that your boy could have used.

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ: I know. There's absolutely no doubt in my mind that had literature been available, that's probably all he would have needed. Someone to say to him, "You're O.K., you're really normal and you're going to be fine." It's just that he didn't know, so we were ignorant, and so probably we made things really difficult for him unknowingly. But the biggest problem that he faced was in the schools. See, they were very, very hard on each other, and there was violence in the schools. The boys that were pointed out as gay in the school were really abused, not just verbally. Robbie actually stopped a boy from being beaten with a stick. Someone had picked up a piece of wood and was after him in a parking lot at school because the boy was gay. And it was for nothing. So it has to be addressed. You can't pretend that it's not there.

ADELE STARR: Having a husband that is a lawyer, and just the experience that you have, how did you find the legal system reacting to your son and the whole process? Did you find the system to be helpful in any way?

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ: Well we paid for our legal help. However, through the Gay and Lesbian Center we were offered legal help immediately, and had we needed it I'm sure we could have availed ourselves of it. I can't complain about that aspect of it.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: The logical follow-up is during this period of incarceration. Have you found in your interactions with those authorities -- is there sensitivity there? Or is that continuing to be difficult?

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ: Well, the jails are horrendous. The experience of waiting to get in to visit someone in the part of the jail set aside for gays is an experience. The Sheriff comes out, they are usually these young men who are just getting involved in the system and you have people quite often, at least in my case who are quite traumatized who are not inside the jail, who are outside coming to visit and they yell out, "All the gays, line up over here, and all the others, line up over here." We put a stop to it. You have to do it extremely carefully because the people who

are in that system you have to treat with great care. You don't want any possibility of whoever is on the inside to be the brunt of their hostility.

It would be nice if there were some sort of educational process for these men who are in charge of taking care of the men in prison. The jail system takes care of -- usually there are young boys in there generally who are involved with drug and prostitution-type of crimes. They're very young men and I think a little bit of kindness among the men who are there, jailers, probably would go a long way. I would love to see something done to educate them as well.

DUNCAN DONOVAN: The American Civil Liberties Union has several ongoing lawsuits that are open-ended relating to safety in the jail system and if at any time you have some harassment problem, Adele Starr has my phone number, please call me.

BARBARA ROSENKRANTZ: I think that the problem now that he's actually in the state prison system is not really a problem anymore. It's the city and county jails that I think need a little work. The day before Robert was transferred to Chino, the boy that was his cell mate, well his head was bashed in by a group of policemen who came in. I don't know what their reasoning was but that's what they did and Robbie was really shocked by it. So there's no doubt that there is a problem in that system. There are boys in there who did nothing more than jaywalk.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you so much. We have several presentations. I believe Gary Yates is here. He is from the High Risk Youth Program at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles and he is here to spend a few minutes with us on the subject of runaways and homeless youth.

GARY YATES

Children's Hospital, High Risk Youth Program

Runaways and Homeless Teenagers

GARY YATES: Thank you for the opportunity to come and talk with you today. I'll try to keep my comments brief and answer any questions that you have.

People are always concerned with statistics when it comes to runaway and homeless youth. In 1983 there was a study done by the Department of Health and Human Services. Their estimate is: anywhere between 750,000 and 1,500,000 young people run away from home every year in the United States. They also estimate that approximately 60% of those go home within 72 hours, but that 25% of those young people are called chronic street youth and make their living on the streets of the major urban centers of the country.

In 1981, United Way did a study here in L.A. that estimated that in the county there were approximately 10,000 young people on the streets any given day. And in Hollywood alone they thought it was around 4,000. No one knows for sure about those numbers, but one thing that is certain is the number of shelter beds that are available for young people in Los Angeles County and that is 24. They are short-term shelter beds. Eighteen of them are for two weeks, six are for 30 days in the Aviva Center Shelter which houses only young women who are homeless. That's the system of care that existed up until recently.

Now I've worked at Children's Hospital, Division of Adolescent Medicine for the last five years directing the high-risk youth program. Basically, we provide outpatient medical and psychotherapy services to young people 12 through 24 for a program we run at the Los Angeles Free Clinic. We see approximately 2,000 young people every year, about 10%-15% of those are kids living on the streets here in Hollywood.

We conducted a study, seeing how we're an academic set-up, looked at those young people to see, because our clinical judgment was they were quite more at risk of just about everything than their counterparts who had not run away from home. The study confirmed that both in the medical and in the psychological areas these young people are at very, very high risk. To look at their history one begins to see that one of the reasons is they are a very abused group of young people. Just to give you an example of

the young people we looked at in that particular study one out of five in their first visit to a doctor indicated that the first time they had sex was before the age of 10. That's obviously sexual abuse. Many of them have run from situations like that. In our work with them, both on the psychotherapy and social work as well as medical, one of the biggest problems we had was finding a place to let them get stable. Being that these are the chronic street variety two weeks is not enough time to turn around lives that have been broken all the way along.

We worked very hard with the State Legislature and helped lobby through a bill called AB 1596 that was authored by Art Agnos of San Francisco. Roberti here, Russ, and a number of L.A. people at the state level co-sponsored the bill. It got the Governor's signature last year and it's funding two pilot projects, one in San Francisco and one in Los Angeles. Children's Hospital does have this pilot project. It's entitled "Homeless Youth." I want to tell you what it's doing and what we've found because I think we're going to know a whole lot more about what's happening to these young people than we have before because of this project.

The major emphasis of the project is to create a more coordinated system of care for these youth. One of the things I've certainly noticed and I'm sure you've heard all day is that the system of care in about every area in Los Angeles is very fragmented. When you're talking about young people who are transient and not very stable anyway, any kind of barrier for them getting from one place to another to receive the help they need ends up with them not getting what they need. What we've done is convene a coordinating council for homeless youth services. There are 24 agencies represented -- it's everything from the Los Angeles Police Department to Children of the Night and we meet on a bimonthly basis to network with one another and close down the gaps that exist in the system of care here in Los Angeles. In addition, there are 12 service delivery agencies in that coordinating council who are reporting to the hospital on a monthly basis, building a data base, looking at what's really happening. Anytime you talk homeless, it's very difficult to count.

In the first three months of our operation, October, November, December, the six shelter agencies that we have in Los Angeles sheltered 357 young people and turned away 1,166 youngsters. The new project Homeless Youth has a shelter so that's increased the number of beds actually to 44, because we have a 20 bed here in Hollywood. I really feel like question about the number is really a moot one. The point is we do not have enough services to meet the demand of the kids who are asking for help.

I think it's important to recognize that I would guess that the majority of kids that live on the street, unless it's cold, do not ask for shelter. One of the reasons for that is they recognize it's only for two

weeks and there's no point really unless they're tired and need a place to stay, take a shower. There really isn't much point in going to a two week shelter. At the core of this project with the umbrella of the coordinating council is a 20 bed shelter. We call it an emergency overnight shelter. It's run by the Los Angeles Youth Network through a subcontract from us and it's housed at the Hollywood Y.M.C.A. There's a hall about half this size, a big social hall and at night it's converted into a shelter for youth with futons. Kids get showers, fed, and they can stay there overnight. Then, during the day, they move up to the counseling or case management center where they're worked on a plan to attempt to get off the street. Once again as testimony to the demand, that shelter opened October 6th, and it's been full ever since. So they've sheltered 93 kids in the first three months and turned away 98. In looking at the young people that have used that we're breaking down who they are. Are they situational runaways? This is one of the problems -- the public image of runaway young people is that it is the kid who runs away over the telephone bill and goes back home in a couple days. That's certainly true, but in the young people that we're seeing right now, over 50% of them are chronic homeless street kids. They're not going home. Many of them have been abused, many have been abandoned and don't know where their parents are. We have a lot of people in Los Angeles and Orange Counties who live in motels because they can't make a first and last. We consistently hear stories of young people who go home to the motel and no one's home. They've all left.

One of the unique things we have in the project Homeless Youth is a very good working relationship with the Hollywood Division L.A.P.D. I want to recognize Lt. Ed Hocking because he's done a great deal to try to make the program work. What they're doing is running a pilot project where the police, when they pick up a homeless youth, instead of arresting them and putting them in a probation bed are giving them the option of going to the shelter instead. Using that mechanism the first couple of months they referred 13 young people to the shelter program. The agreement with the young person is that they will be arrested if they're picked up on the street again without the passport that's given that they're working a program to get off the streets and none of those young people have been arrested since. That either means that they're working their program or that they're too good for the police to catch them. It is a unique program and it's being looked at by law enforcement around the state. Ten years ago we arrested these kids and put them in juvenile hall, then they were out on the streets. There is a strong push to do that again in this state but its a bit ludicrous as our juvenile halls are running at double capacity right now. And these young people don't belong in juvenile hall. And one of the interesting points of 1976 which was the last year we incarcerated what are called status offenders which is breaking the law because you're a minor, and wouldn't be a law violation if you were not -- is that in juvenile halls in this state we put more kids that were status offenders than kids who had actually broken the law.

You should know that the Little Hoover Commission, which is a state commission out of the Governor's Office, is studying this problem *right now* throughout the state and is going to come out with a policy recommendation for legislation in the area next fall. I'm on the advisory committee, as are a number of people from the Los Angeles Area. I think that opens up the issue enough for you. I have some recommendations for you as the Task Force is considering this with other areas of family diversity.

The first recommendation I would say is for you to ask for a summary report from us of the information that we're collecting right now so that you can, as you prepare your report in June, have something to take a hard look at, that will give you some information that you won't find anywhere else in the county or in the state. And we'd be happy to do that for you.

The second thing is something more practical that you can look into right now and that is that one of the real barriers to care for these people is transportation. We have a van now that operates for project Homeless Youth and takes these young people to medical and psychotherapy appointments and they tend to make it now. But without that, giving people like this a bus voucher to make it to a medical exam that they can trade on the street for money or drugs is a little ridiculous. What is possible is that a city could look at a van service. There are a number of them, about a half-dozen runaway adolescent homeless service agencies here in the Hollywood area that try to access a system of care for young people. This is probably true for anybody that lives in the County of Los Angeles who is indigent. If you've ever ridden a bus you know how difficult it is to get from one place to another. That would be something to take a hard look at. It wouldn't be a great expense to the city and it would be greatly helpful to the system of care.

Many of these young people are not going home. I think one of these days the people in this state, in this city are going to have to sit up and recognize that it's a false assumption that the best course of action for many of these youth is to be unified with their parents. That's the way all these programs focus right now. We have a mythical belief in the family in this country that people are really Ozzie and Harriet; they are not ... or Little Beaver, or whoever he is, and it's not the truth and we're going to have to recognize that foster care is not an option either. If there's one thing we lack in the County of L.A. it's appropriate foster care and we're not going to get it and I think the people think that we're going to have campaigns and raise funds -- just looking to the past for answers -- and you don't find answers in the past. What really is going to need to happen is that we're going to have to recognize that the young kids who are 16 and 17 who are really independent of their parents need to be helped out through general relief as if they were emancipated. They need to be connected with a program, but they have to get that relief much easier than they can now. Right now, in order for the court to give them that

relief, they have to show that they've been stable for six months and I assert to you that's impossible when there's no place for you to stay. You can't show you're stable at 16; whereas, if we would just emancipate them on cause -- they have no place to stay, they want to work on independent living -- monitor them, make sure they are getting job training, but provide them that \$400 a month that could help them pay for apartment living. We have to divert them from the street prostitution and the drug they're on now to survive. And until we do that we're going to have a lot of difficulty working with this kind of young person and help them get back off the street.

One last point. Just to demonstrate graphically for all of us why it may be important -- I mean maybe they're just all a mess and they're going to be the homeless of tomorrow and we shouldn't bother with them -- but just to graphically demonstrate why we might want to there's a recent study out of George Washington University called "All One System" and it looks at a lot of things in the economy. One of the things it looks at is Social Security, and the number of people in the work force. This statistic is the reason there is nervousness about social security which has a lot of money in it today, and that is that in 1952 there were 18 people in the workforce for every person drawing SSI and in 1992 that ratio will drop to 3 to 1, one of the three will be on welfare. I would assert to you that that's a very good reason to get kids off the street and back into the workforce, especially for those of us who in the year 2000 might be looking at drawing SSI.

PAULA STARR: I really want to substantiate what you just stated because yesterday I had a situation with one young (one 18, one 23 year old) gay couple, they're homeless; we did our best to get them assistance, then we found out that they were Canadian Indians; the Jay Treaty wasn't recognized anywhere. I couldn't get them general relief, I couldn't get them temporary housing, I couldn't get them anything yesterday. They're still on the streets right now. I gave them bus money to go get certain things done. They said they couldn't go to the appointment. I know they didn't go to the appointment. So I really wish I had a solution for this.

CELIA MATA: A question on the pilot program. Could you qualify whether or not the pilot program does assist any youth in emancipation either through skill development or otherwise?

GARY YATES: Yes, we do. As a matter of fact, the pilot project (it's a two-year pilot) started last July, but operations actually started in October. About one-third of the kids that come in are working toward some sort of independent living and the kind of assistance they get is either job training, or actual jobs. Sixteen of the 33 kids that opted for independent living have gotten jobs in the program. Now these are tougher kids to work with for jobs because they're seventeen and under at this particular shelter.

The state law mandates you can't shelter minors with adults. It's probably a good idea but, yes, they work on getting things that you and I might not think about like birth certificates, like social security numbers that most of these kids don't have. They keep no I.D. on them. That way if they're picked up it's hard to tell who they are. So those kinds of basic things, and there are what are called Life Skills Training Groups that go on during the day at the case management center for them. So the answer is yes.

In addition, I don't want to make it sound like all the kids are independent living candidates. About 1 out of 5 of the young people who have access to this particular program today have been reunified with their parents. Nobody's going to keep them away from their parents if their parents want them back and they want to go. But what we see is the kids that are harder to work with, the kids that are staying the full 60 days, are the kids that are going on to independent living.

CELIA MATA: What role would you like to see L.A. City take in this particular pilot program or for future recommendations?

GARY YATES: Well, I guess the two things that I said -- well, all three. I'd like you to wait a little while. I'd like to give you some information. Not just the first three months, but I think the first six months so you have something to look at about what's happening in the whole city. I think a lot of times we go into things prior to knowing exactly. You know we'll go build a new shelter and that may not be what's necessary so I'd like to find out and I think we will find out so the first time we've been able to do this the agencies are being so cooperative I just want to acknowledge them all. We have 12 agencies reporting. We got all their reports in and they're not getting a penny for that. For them to be willing to do that shows their interest. That's one thing.

I really would like you to look into the possibility of a city van to transport these kids by appointment from place to place in groups. I think it could be done at a very cheap cost to the city and it would be a very big step in the right direction of bridging some of the fragmentation.

The other thing is that we will be working with the county to try to shift some of the ways that the juvenile court judges approach these kids as far as emancipation. If there's any role the City Task Force can take in supporting that sort of stance we would appreciate it.

PAULA STARR: Have you worked with the L.A. Job Corps?

GARY YATES: Yes, Children's Hospital. I work with the Division of Adolescent Medicine and we do all the medical care for the Job Corps so we're closely connected with them. And yes, we're working some of these kids into the Job Corps -- that's another option that we're looking at.

MARIO PEREZ: Approximately how many of these runaways are over the age of 21?

GARY YATES: Well, at this particular shelter not very many because they're 17 and under to get the shelter we have here, but on the high risk youth program which offers health care up through 24 a substantial number of the young people we've seen. I can't give you an accurate percentage, but my gut level is -- around 20% are between 20 and 24, the kids we've seen medically over the last four or five years. You have to understand that living on the street is not always just being on the street. It can be living in a motel, or living with a friend who trades sex for a place to stay. So they're not all out on the street. But of the kids we saw in that one year, that we looked at their profiles. One out of 10 were actually living on the street. About 20% of the medical patients we see are homeless. They ran away years ago, they've actually been living here or transversing back and forth between San Francisco, San Diego and here -- for -- the longest I've seen a kid out there -- I saw a kid that hit the streets at 12. When he turned 21 and he was still on them.

NORA BALADERIAN: Can you give us a breakdown basically of the boys and girls -- how many are disabled, non-disabled and what kind of races are represented?

GARY YATES: Disabled and non-disabled may be difficult. I don't think we're capturing that kind of data. I can give you a breakdown of ethnicity and I can give you a breakdown of male/female.

In this whole system of care that we're collecting data from it's about 50-50 with a few more males than it is females. When you look at the Project Homeless Youth Shelter, it's 3 to 2, males to females. When you look at the whole system of care it's about 56%-57% Caucasian, then about 25% Black and about 10-11% Hispanic, and you have a smattering of American Indian, like that. This appears to be a Caucasian issue. It is across the country and it is here too. The other thing is, because of the Canadian citizenship, that you mentioned, the kids who live on the streets in Hollywood, and therefore in the City of Los Angeles, many of them are not from the City of Los Angeles. This is a gathering point for homelessness in the country and it has been for a long time, just like the Tenderloin area in San Francisco is. And in our statistics about one-half the kids we see are either from out of county around the state or from other states. In the four years we've had the High Risk Youth Project we have seen kids from 42 other states that are homeless on the streets here.

Then the barrier comes up with bus tickets back home but no other care. Our personal bias is that this is a poor waste of taxpayer dollars. We might as well give them the care. They're here. They're in a sense residents they just don't have a street address.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY. Thank you, Gary. That was very interesting and we especially appreciate the offer of data -- very useful to us later, so follow through on that. Lora Weinroth is here. She is the directing attorney for the Battered Women's Legal Counseling Clinic and she is speaking to us on the subject of domestic violence, areas for improving city services. We've had a couple of presentations today on that and we're very interested in this topic.

LORA WEINROTH

Directing Attorney, Battered Women's Legal Counseling Clinic

Domestic Violence: Improving City Services

LORA WEINROTH: You gave my name and title, I am also co-counsel for plaintiffs on a suit against the city of Los Angeles, more specifically the Los Angeles Police Department because of their refusal to provide non-discriminatory law enforcement to the victims of domestic violence. The case was settled with a consent decree but the court retained jurisdiction until December 31, 1989 so we're not out of court yet.

The topic in general is domestic violence and I would like to define my terms to be sure we all know what we mean. I mean physical violence between adults who are presently at war who have formerly cohabited whether married to each other or not. They may be parents of a child without ever having cohabited or they may be in or have been in what the California Legislature calls a dating relationship. Don't ask me what that means -- I have no idea, but that is a term invented by the Legislature, so I'm going to use it.

I would also like to distinguish between what are generally called family disputes on one hand and family violence on the other. Family disputes are extremely disruptive, not only to the family but particularly to the children. But I think they're disruptive to the social fabric and tend on the whole not to be the kind of conduct which is criminally cognizable or with which society deals in a way other than permitting the people to get out of the relationship. I therefore address myself to physical violence between adults. Child abuse and elder abuse about both of which we have heard, and you will hear -- these are of separate treatment.

Domestic violence is considered to be the singlemost underreported crime in the country. I'll give you some very brief and I'm afraid dull statistics I think are essential. The first thing to note, and forgive me for making a personal remark, I'm likely to quote the F.B.I. a number of times in my presentation. This does not mean I'm overly fond of the F.B.I, it simply means that for purposes of these discussions they represent I think relatively authoritative statistical work. Ninety-eight plus per cent of the victims of domestic violence are women. Between 50% and 80% of women will be victims of domestic violence at least one time during their lifetimes. Seven out of 10 assaults against women are perpetrated by spouse, boyfriend, or ex-boyfriend. Most incidents of domestic violence take place

in front of the children. Domestic violence seems to escalate over time in both seriousness and frequency. Much domestic violence seems to be learned behavior transmitted generationally, particularly between fathers and sons. Lastly, domestic violence seems to cut across most usual demographic categories, that is to say, it seems to be independent of socioeconomic status, of occupation, of the number of children in the home, and of ethnicity.

I had a choice to make, which was whether or not to confront the Committee with the catalog of horrors or to speak in relatively general terms. I tend to be something of a coward and I've decided to speak in relatively general terms. If you're interested in the catalog of horrors, you can go to Department 59 at 111 N. Hill St. which is our Superior Court and read the declarations submitted by plaintiffs in the class action suit against the Los Angeles Police Department. The case number is on the papers I've given to you so you won't have to bother jotting it down.

I thought it might be interesting to again look at this a little bit statistically. A study was published by the Department of Justice in 1986 and it looked at what law enforcement personnel did with incidents of domestic violence. They found that among the cases of domestic violence that came to the attention of law enforcement personnel and on which record were kept (which is not necessarily saying the same thing), half of the assaults that law enforcement agencies classified as misdemeanors were in fact the cause of injuries, such that had it been stranger violence, the law enforcement agencies by their very own guidelines would have classified them as felonies. Another slightly different way of looking at the same sort of analysis was also published by the Justice Department in 1986. Their analysis revealed that more than two-thirds of the victims of non-stranger violence sustained injuries. Twenty-five per cent of the victims required medical attention and over 25% of the incidents involved guns, knives, bludgeons or other weapons. You can see that the problem is endemic and of the utmost seriousness.

The question I was asked to address is, "What can the city of Los Angeles do about it?"

Well, I have lots of ideas, all of which are going to cost money, naturally. I would like to take them in the order in which I think they ought to be prioritized and it happens that my first suggestion is I think probably going to be the one that you're going to get the most bang for the bucks, and that is law enforcement.

Without putting too fine a point on it, I think I would like to see the city become very active indeed in supervising at all levels of the Los Angeles Police Department -- both in policy and in the field -- to insure that law enforcement personnel obeys the law just like anybody else has to

who walks down the street. I cannot complain about California legislation with respect to domestic violence. We have lots of good laws on the books. We have domestic violence restraining orders. We have harassment restraining orders, I cannot speak for the entire state. I can speak for the Los Angeles County Superior Courts and I must say on the whole the judges and commissioners who sit in Superior Court in the county are very sympathetic, very understanding. I do not mean that they are not fair, but they do not go out of their way to make women who appear before them with restraining orders feel in any way that it is their fault, that they are guilty of something. They treat them properly and that's what I call being fair. We do have enforcement problems, and as you know, the suit was settled and theoretically I'm not supposed to say this but everybody knows that when a suit is settled the people who walk away with what they want won, even though the other side never will admit that they lost. It is extremely difficult -- I realize that -- to supervise 7,000+ police officers in the field, but what we need is some strict attention paid at the policy making level to having the Los Angeles Police Department do what they are supposed to, both under state law and under the terms of the consent decree. So I would like to see monitoring and supervision preferably from the outside of Los Angeles Police Department policies and field practices. I'm one of the few lawyers who voted for public administration of attorney discipline so I'm perfectly happy to have outside agencies look at me and I think the Police Department ought to share my views on that.

I would like to see expanded and professional training in the laws, the statutes, and the consent decree in the general dynamics of domestic violence given both at the police academy and repeatedly at periodic roll call training. I don't think it's enough to have a sergeant who may be, has been or still is a wonderful field sergeant be put in charge of crisis intervention and domestic violence training at the police academy after perhaps sitting through one or two -- I don't know how they run it -- quarters, or semesters and then be qualified to choose material, to instruct instructors, to supervise trainers etc. I think we need independent and professional training in those areas. That training must include, and when I say "must" I put that in quotation marks. It means that I very much hope that it will include training in undoing what has been a myth in the law enforcement community for a very, very long time. I again rely on F.B.I. statistics. The myth is that domestic violence calls are the single most dangerous call for a police officer to make as far as his or her life and limb are concerned. F.B.I. statistics, and the bibliography is in the paper that I gave to Tom, so if you don't believe me you can go read it for yourself -- F.B.I. statistics have revised this. They have analyzed data on police fatalities and police injuries from 1973 to 1984 and I quote, "Domestic disturbances are one of the least frequent types of incidents involved in police homicide and low assault and injury rates, anywhere from 2% to 8% are associated with domestic disturbances in general." It's very difficult to get police officers to be, forget enthusiastic, let it be willing, to do what

they're supposed to when they're called to the scene of an incident of domestic violence if they think that this is the singlemost dangerous call for them. Well we can reassure them it isn't.

I would like also to have some input from the city into appropriate prioritizing of police dispatching and I won't go into that until I get to one of the other suggestions that I have for the city.

I would like also, if possible, either through the City Attorney's Office or the Police Department to see continuous and extensive funding of some kind of a handout, preferably multilingual, and I think Spanish in Los Angeles is no longer multilingual enough to give women an idea of the kind of resources that are available in the community and the kind of legal rights that women enjoy.

My second large subheading would be data collecting. The Los Angeles Police Department did not collect data; by that I mean they did not segregate domestic violence from any other kind of assault or battery until they were mandated to do so by state law. And that was very recently. I would like to urge the city to support this very strongly because that is the only way in which we can get an idea of how much resources to put into that kind of law enforcement presence.

The next large item that I would like to address is what I will call the prosecution of domestic violence offenders and I address myself first of all primarily to the City Attorney's Office which is under control of the City. Whatever influence the City can exert over the District Attorney would be, I'm sure, extremely welcome but it's the City Attorney that is primarily under the control of the City. I was very happy to hear from one of the earlier speakers that the City Attorney's Office had reinstituted their domestic violence program. They had one quite awhile ago and I thought that it was sort of dormant. It turns out it was actually terminated in 1983 because federal funds ran out. Well I think the City might try to find a little bit of money to make sure that at least one or two warm bodies sit around in a domestic violence Task Force in the City Attorney's Office. I would also like to urge after appropriate data gathering has taken place that prosecutions be prioritized. I am going to express my outrage at the fact that the City Attorney's Office holds so-called Office Hearings which are presumably the first cut to decide on prosecutions that are staffed by non-attorneys -- never mind already non-deputies -- but non-attorneys. And I can by that horrifying bit of information if I may get anecdotal, when I had an occasion to read Los Angeles Magazine which I ordinarily do not, but we were looking for a restaurant to take out-of-town guests to and my husband saw the article and he screeched and said, "You'll love this!" But I do think that that is not proper. I would like to see, if possible, written policies establishing criteria and procedures for prosecutors. I would urge the City Attorney to think very seriously even though we all know about

the First Amendment to train their prosecutors in how to talk to complaining witnesses so that the complaining witness does not feel intimidated and discouraged by the system. I would like to see, if possible, an avoidance of outright dismissals in favor of deferred prosecution with conditions of probation such as counseling, for example. The City Attorney, to the best of my knowledge never, ever asks for criminal stay-away orders. Never! They say "oh, go get a restraining order". Well that's fine, but the City Attorney has the ability as part of deferred prosecution probation, what have you, to ask for criminal stay away orders that would make life a lot easier for a lot of the battered women. I think finally the City Attorney or a task force that would coordinate needs to do some community outreach, again in multilingual form. We should let people know, particularly women, what their rights are, what the resources are and where in the city they can go to find some assistance when in fact they are out of their homes, hungry, injured and with children.

The last think I would like to say is that if the city could exercise its influence to try and get Saturday or night Family Law Court sessions going and not just muni-court for traffic offenses it would be wonderful, because there are large numbers of women out there who cannot literally afford to give up a day's pay to go to court. That's about all I have to say. I thank you for your time and I will be very happy to take questions.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you.

DUNCAN DONOVAN: I was somewhat startled by your figure that about 50% are for misdemeanors that would have been classified as felonies if the episode had occurred between strangers. I don't know if you are competent to respond to what I'm curious about. I wonder how much of this problem, since most of these things are viewed by men as the officers, and the attorney's offices -- I wonder how much of this could be put to a sexist attitude by men on what the role of a man is in the family.

LORA WEINROTH: Do you know where the expression "rule of thumb" comes from? It comes from an old British law which said that a man might chastise his wife provided he did it with a stick no thicker than his thumb.

Let me now give you some details. When I said demographically there seem to be no distinct categories, I would like to take that back just a little bit. There seems to be slight overrepresentation among batterers occupationally speaking, lawyers and police officers. There seem to be slight overrepresentation. In the ethnicity category of Irish. There seems to be a slight overrepresentation if you divide it between religious affiliation of Catholics. So to answer your question, if you have an Irish Catholic cop called to the scene of a domestic violence incident I doubt that anything short of homicide is going to impress him very much.

JAY KOHORN: I've had a lot of experience with the City Attorney's Office Hearing process and I've found it to be extraordinarily helpful because it mediates often instead of creating adversarial situations. Sometimes it's appropriate to have that sort of situation and sometimes it's not. So they start out with it not being and if they based on their conclusions which are then submitted to an attorney who evaluates those conclusions, if they come to the conclusion that they want to put it into the adversarial system, they do. But I have never in my years of working with the City Attorney Office Hearings process had any occasion to be upset with the fact that I wasn't with the actual attorney, that I was dealing with hearing officers who were non-attorneys. There has never been any problem for me.

LORA WEINROTH: There hasn't been any problem for me, either, because I've never been in one. If I were the victim of a crime and women who have been assaulted and battered are victims of a crime and I have talked to a number of them on the topic, they feel very upset that the system is not paying even so much attention to them as to provide them with at least an attorney to listen to their side of the case. I also feel very strongly about mediation. I suspect in my particular field I'm inevitably drawn to feeling about, in a very different way than you do. I think mediation is fine if you're dealing between parties who are approximately equal in power. By definition the man and the woman who have been, I don't want to say involved, the man who has been the perpetrator of a criminal act and the woman who has been the victim of his physical assault are not dealing on an approximate peer level. And I think in that situation mediation is absolutely inappropriate.

NORA BALADERIAN: My experience is that there is a great deal of what we would call domestic violence among teenagers who are dating in their high school years. They don't live together, they date but there's a serious injury. Could you comment on that?

LORA WEINROTH: I think that's probably what the Legislature meant by dating relationship. I don't think they really meant to exclude sexual relationships necessarily. I think they meant to include very young people or people who for other reasons were not really living in a domestic or quasi-domestic context but did have intimate contact. I was horrified to read that apparently violence of that sort -- dating violence -- is pervasive and very serious, as I was equally horrified to read that apparently date rape at a very young age is also very pervasive and can be extremely violent.

We tend to see a very surprisingly large number of very young women in our city (question: How young?) I don't ask - and let me tell you what I mean by that theoretically. If they are under 18 they cannot bring a case in their own name. They would have to have a guardian ad litem appointed.

If they can pass, and if nobody asks them silly questions in court, then I'm not going to ask. I'm not going to ask. We get a number that are in high school, we get a number that are barely beginning junior college and where the relationship -- and it doesn't make any difference to our purposes whether or not actual sex was involved, the relationship -- is clearly a dating one. Large numbers.

NORA BALADERIAN: My experience is they don't tell anybody. That's the way the relationship is. Is there any indication that you know of in terms of high school level that getting beat up is a part of the relationship?

LORA WEINROTH: I think the Southern California Coalition on Battered Women put out a book, I forget what its called, it's a paperback. I looked at it once a long time ago. I wasn't very happy with some aspects of it so I suppressed all memories of it and I can't tell you to what level it is directed. I thought it was grammar and junior high but it might perfectly well be usable at a high school level.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: I need to thank you very much for excellent testimony. Very interesting testimony. I'd like to ask Ann Finger to please come forward. She is with the California Association of the Physically Handicapped and she is here to speak about some of those factors that relate to the problems and challenges of disabled in families. We're delighted that you are here with us today.

ANN FINGER

California Association of the Physically Handicapped

Problems Impeding the Disabled in Family Living

ANN FINGER: I'm speaking today not only out of my experience of knowing many people who are disabled parents but of being a disabled mother myself. I think one of the biggest problems that disabled parents face is that it's been assumed up to the recent past that disabled people should not have children. And it's still the prevailing assumption that we do not. This assumption is reflected in a lack of services available to us, and social prejudices, and a world that's designed as if we did not exist. I'd like to remind the members of the Task Force that disability cuts across all social lines, ethnic lines, class lines. Thus, disabled people, and families with a disabled member, are to be found among all the other groups that you have heard about today.

When you talk about teenagers and undocumented persons, when you talk about lesbians and gay men, when you talk about homeless people, old people, runaways, and victims of domestic violence, you must remember that disabled people are among all those groups. In fact, in some cases, old people and homeless people are the first two that first spring to mind. They form a very large percentage of those groups. In addition, members of the Task Force need to know that disabled people are twice as likely to be poor as the general population. Even when we are not officially below the poverty line, we tend to have far less money than non-disabled people -- those with similar education and background -- often accompanied by greater financial needs due to our disabilities.

Access is usually thought of as physical ability to enter a building, or take part in a program. It's been the big issue that disabled people have fought for for the last 15 years. It's that, but it's much more than that. I want to give you an example of a situation where a hospital was physically accessible but not truly accessible. My son was born at Santa Monica Hospital. And a few months later, another friend of mine who is also a disabled mother -- her son was hospitalized there. She went up to the maternity ward, she was breastfeeding and she went up to use the breast pump up there and everybody said, "Oh, how's your baby doing?" And she said, "Well, he's O.K. but I don't know you" and they said, "Oh, but we know you, your baby was born here a few months ago", and she said, "No, that wasn't me" -- and consistently staff member after staff member took this woman for me who is a foot taller than I am, has different colored hair than

I do, and who looks nothing like me. People kept insisting to her and she kept saying, "No, my baby was born in Cedars" and they kept saying, "No, your baby was born here. We remember." That's an example where there was physical access but there was not in fact access. People could not literally see us as individual people. So that when we talk about services being accessible, we need to be sure that they're not just physically accessible. We're not just talking about sign language interpreters although we are talking about that; we're not just talking about taped or Brailled material, but we're talking about services that are truly sensitive to the needs and concerns of disabled parents. The best way to provide those services is to have disabled people on staff, which some see as an impossible task.

We are 10% of the population. I forget what the unemployment rates are, I know for disabled women who are ready and able to work the unemployment rate is close to 60%. The city needs to have an affirmative action program for disabled people. The other way to have programs that are truly accessible is to have people be trained -- the whole staff be trained in the needs and concerns of disabled people. Childcare centers, information lines for parents, schools, hospital and parenting groups are just a few of the places that need that training. And that training should be done by disabled people. Another point of view where a building or service is inaccessible to one member of a disabled family, it's frequently inaccessible to the whole family. For instance, if an R.T.D. bus doesn't have a lift, or if that lift doesn't work, then not just the disabled member of the family is shut out from that bus, but the whole family is. If a family with a disabled member seeks counseling and cannot find a counseling center that is aware of the concerns of disabled people, then that whole family has been effectively shut out from counseling.

I'm going to touch on four areas which are of key concern to disabled parents: support services, schooling, housing and health care.

In-home support services is a program which provides attendant care to disabled people. But it does not provide care to the children of those needing attendant care. Thus parents who cannot bathe or feed or dress themselves can get attendant care to provide for their own needs but not to provide for the needs of their children. This obviously needs to be changed. Frequently, foster care is the only alternative available to disabled families who have difficulty coping with parenting. In Kenneth Therman's "Children of Handicapped Parents," he reports that particularly with parents who are developmentally disabled, courts tend to take custody of the children rather than providing parents with support services and education. This often results in children being taken from homes which, although they may be lacking in intellectual stimulation, are not at all lacking in love. The children are then placed in a series of foster homes with all the problems inherent in foster care. And, ironically, such care usually is far more

expensive than the provision of support and parental education would have been in the first place.

When we think of accessible schooling we usually assume we are talking about schoolrooms and programs accessible to disabled students. Yet physically disabled parents of students frequently find themselves unable to enter inaccessible buildings for parent-teacher conferences. Deaf parents may find themselves unable to communicate with their children's teachers if sign language interpreters are not provided. Blind parents cannot read a child's report card if it is not put in Braille or taped. In short, we are often unable to take a full role in our children's education. The definition of accessible education must be expanded to include access for parents and other significant caregivers.

The designers of housing built specifically for disabled people usually assume that we live alone or at most with one other person. Housing must be built with the needs of disabled parents in mind. This situation is even more pressing for the disabled woman or family with a disabled member in need of temporary housing. Shelters for the homeless and battered women shelters must also be accessible.

Finally, I want to address the problem of accessible health care especially in regard to pregnancy and childbirth. Disabled women seeking information about becoming pregnant can find their concerns not even taken seriously. I've heard of a pregnant woman in a wheelchair who encountered a nurse who roared with laughter and said, "You're pregnant? Now I've heard everything!" Disabled women are sometimes urged to have abortions. Frequently our pregnancies are seen to be high risk. I don't know any of the statistics on the prevalence of C-section births among disabled women but I do know that among disabled women I know personally the C-section rate is startlingly high. I question whether many of these were medically necessary. It seems they were due more to doctor distress than any other factor and I would remind you the maternal mortality rate from C-sections is at least twice as high as it is with a vaginal birth. Disabled women like all women have the right to family centered maternity care with no unwanted interventions. The growth of court ordered C-sections poses a special threat to disabled women. These are just a few of the issues that we need to see addressed, but I'm very glad to see this Task Force making a start on addressing them. Thank you.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you very much. Are there any questions?

LOUIS VERDUGO: I'm with the Attorney General's Office and I'm in the Civil Rights Enforcement Unit and we deal with the issues of enforcement of the accessibility laws, and I have not a question, but maybe a comment for the group here today. Currently our office has received

numerous complaints about the Los Angeles City Building and Safety Department not enforcing the accessibility laws and regulations that are applicable here in Los Angeles and we are encountering numerous complaints about a lot of new construction especially where the buildings are being put up and not even close to being in conformance with the requirements. It is my understanding that the building department has already met with a committee of the City Council regarding what the city can do to insure that the requirements are met. So I think it would be something that this group would be particularly interested in getting to, say, Councilman Woo's attention, that this proposal which basically I think will address two major issues of lack of staff, lack of training for inspectors to insure that the standards are followed. I think it's something that we as a group should consider in making a recommendation because the city is the primary agency, the building department that is, that is going to be responsible for enforcing these laws. And when the Office of the Attorney General gets it, it's after the fact -- the building is up, concrete's been poured, steel has been put up and it's much more difficult to remedy the problem.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Can you get that data for us? (Yes.) Thank you very much. Very interesting. Finally, Jay Westbrook is here. He's the Media Coordinator for the American Society on Aging for a very interesting issue the portrayal of seniors and family on television and in other media.

JAY WESTBROOK

Media Coordinator, American Society on Aging

Portrayal of Seniors and Families on Television

JAY WESTBROOK: I'm sure you're all happy to see me as the last speaker. In addition to what you just said, I am also an instructor at U.C.L.A. Extension, a national columnist, a member of the L.A. County Elder Abuse and Long Term Care Task Forces, and a private gerontological consultant.

I'm here today to talk to you about the portrayal of families and the elderly on television and in other mass media. There's basically a four-fold rationale for this presentation.

First our society is graying; that is, the numbers and the proportion of those over 65 is increasing as never before. Further, the 85+ age group is now the fastest-growing segment within our society. These aged people often encounter barriers, be they transportation barriers, or access barriers to health and social services. Or they may even be unaware that health and social services are available to them.

Secondly, our society is changing from one of traditional families to non-traditional families, be that single and divorced parents raising children or unmarried couples living together with or without children. Further, Los Angeles has replaced New York City as the melting pot of the United States; that is, within our city here there's more cultural diversity than in any other city in the United States. And these families often encounter other barriers, time barriers, cultural, language barriers or transportation barriers to the same social and health services and may also be unaware of those services.

Third, Los Angeles is the mass media capital of the country, if not the world, and as such it should certainly lead the way in addressing the information needs and providing the positive role models for both families and aging persons.

Fourth, the mass media in general and television specifically are very, very powerful and pervasive forces. In terms of power, they have the power to report, reflect, and reinforce societal changes; to conform or create status. There was certainly no status to being half shaved until Don Johnson of "Miami Vice" was that way. They can mold viewers' perceptions

of reality, color attitudes, and establish or validate ideas, values, and social behavior. It can motivate viewers to action such as writing letters to legislators; it can disseminate information, entertain, and provide a window to the world or be a means of relaxation. It provides a way to structure time, an opportunity to learn, to stimulate and to provide information. Television may provide companionship, provide topics for conversation and also a basis for shared experience. The pervasiveness, on the other hand, of television can be documented by the following few facts. These are for the United States. They are probably higher in Los Angeles. Ninety-six per cent of all households have a television. Eighty-nine per cent of all households have color television. Each television in the United States is on 6.5 hours a day on the average. There are 1,100 stations on the air not including any of the cable stations. Eighty per cent of the households in the United States get seven or more stations and although a single year contains only 8,760, hours there are 5.5 million hours of programming broadcast annually.

Let me address the presence and portrayals of families and the elderly, and this part of my testimony will focus specifically on television and I will later address in a very brief manner the other mass media.

In the beginning there were family shows such as "Leave it to Beaver," "The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet," in which wives stayed home and cleaned house in their heels and hose and pearls and the man either went to work or vaguely alluded to it. The issues addressed in these shows weren't issues, they were problems like what you do when you break a neighbor's window with a baseball or what you do when you realize you have two dates for the dance on Saturday night. The characters were unidimensional, and storylines were certainly trivial. It was also interesting that while sons were very plentiful, daughters were very frugally inserted.

In the beginning, the elderly were not present in very many T.V. shows and when they were present, they were traditionally depicted, in a stereotypical manner, as slow, one-dimensional, sick, dependent, less intelligent, rigid or closed minded, senile, sexless, useless, incompetent, and lacking dignity and a range of depth of emotion. As with the children of families, females were cast far less often than were males. As few elderly as were shown, even fewer were shown in a role of significance and the standard measure for a role of significance is that it's indicated by a role portrayal lasting two or more minutes. Further, in many of the roles in which the elderly did appear they were cast as victims.

In the transition period of the 1970's, we saw family shows in which families were portrayed in a manner closer to reality and the issues they confronted were more truly issues. This is the period which gave us "All in the Family" and "Mash," "Alice," "Maud," "Mary Hartman, Mary Hartman," "Soap," "Taxi," "Mork and Mindy" and "One Day at a Time" -- all of which

were pioneers in their own way in that they blazed a trail out of the land of bubble gum and into the realities of the 1970's. Even Mork and Mindy did some excellent shows on aging.

The aged, during the same period of the 70's, were seen with greater frequency and greater regularity and to some degree they were shown as richer and more multi-dimensional characters. Particularly in shows like "Taxi," "Mork and Mindy" or "The Walton's." In other shows, such as "Barney Miller," elderly characters like Fish -- for those of you that know the show -- appeared regularly but were still treated in a most stereotypical manner. In some cases, as with shows like "Real People" or "That's Incredible," we witnessed a form of what is called reverse stereotyping, that is showing the elderly who were the antithesis of the traditional elderly stereotype. These are the shows that present the 90 year old marathoner or motorcyclist or the 90 year old couple that climbs a mountain and makes love at the top of the mountain -- again, hardly reflective of what most people experience as they age in our society.

However, by the Fall of 1986 television season, I can say we've come a long way, baby. Families on television finally reflect reality at least in some situations. We now see numerous single-parent families in shows like "Kate and Allie," "Heart of the City," "Dads," and "Who's the Boss?" For the first time since "The Walton's" we are seeing many multigenerational families, both the three and four generation variety. Examples of this include the new "Life with Lucy" show, the "Ellen Burstyn" show, the new "Leave it to Beaver" show -- I think all three of which have been cancelled-- and the absolutely marvelous "Our House," which is cursed with the burden of being against "60 Minutes," but is still holding it's own as an absolutely excellent show. Even the one category of television show which has been most negligent in portraying either elderly persons or intergenerational family, that is, Saturday morning children's programming, even that has come forward into the 1980's. "The Smurfs" now have introduced Grandpa Smurf who lives with the family. They are now a three generation family. There are other shows, fine shows like "The Cosby Show" where there may not be more than two generations under a single roof and yet those episodes which have Cliff's parents, or the children's grandparents in the show are among some of the best episodes aired.

The elderly are also being seen more frequently and in far more realistic roles in which they are complex individuals with emotions, romantic interests, dignity, health and power. The daytime soap operas such as "General Hospital" or "All My Children" and many of the others have always and even now continue to frequently incorporate older individuals as major characters. Even commercials are using older and older actors as spokespeople to target an aging market. You've all seen Harry Morgan, I'm sure, selling insurance. You've all seen a number of people like that. It's interesting that the T.V. Guide of several months ago which talked about

the 10 most handsome and desirable men on television identified John Forsyth as one of those men. When L.A. Magazine a few months ago talked about the 10 most beautiful women in America. When it got to Bo Derreck it was interesting that it said Bo Derreck at 29 is the youngest of our 10 most beautiful women, while 10 years ago 29 would have been the oldest of our 10 most beautiful women.

Many of the made-for-T.V. specials, be it the ABC "After School Special," or the CBS "School Break Special" and numerous made-for-television movies have addresses aging and age related issues, including elder abuse, mandatory retirement, mercy killing and Alzheimer's Disease, as well as addressing family and family related issues including domestic violence, latchkey children, single parenting, drugs, sex, and diseases such as AIDS. For the most part the subjects have been handled with sensitivity and have been devoid of saccharine or sensationalism.

Perhaps the singlemost significant television event in terms of the elderly was created and aired by ABC in May of 1986 and kudos must go to them for producing the news close up "Growing Old in America." ABC took an unprecedented step; the presentation of a three-hour prime-time network news special that examined what it means to grow old in America. Even if the show had not been high quality its airing would have been a landmark, that is, the dedication of three hours of prime time television to aging. However, I am pleased to report that "Growing Old in America" was an excellent, timely, and in-depth exploration of the graying American society.

Now, briefly addressing the other mass media other than television I would say that most of the mass media other than television has responded in much the same manner that television has to the changing nature of families and to the graying of America. There are an increased number of books, scientific journals, magazines, newspapers, the movies and radio programs dealing specifically with family issues or with the elderly and age related issues. On the one hand, they have for the most part done so without sensationalism. On the other hand, select issues do lend themselves to sensationalism -- and the media has bought in hook, line, and sinker, particularly the area of abuses -- elder abuse, child abuse, spousal abuse. As fine as the concept behind the movie "Amos" was, it was so unrealistic that if you know anything about elder abuse it took away credibility from the issue rather than adding it. The one thing it did do was bring attention to the matter, but it brought it in a sensationalistic way.

It is clear then that the media are paying quantitatively more attention to aging and to families than they have in the past and, further, the quality of that attention seems to be improving. It may not be altruism that motivates these changes but rather, for example, a growing awareness on the part of the mass media, the shrinking group of younger viewers, and a quickly expanding group of older viewers with significant time to invest in

viewing and significant dollars to invest in consumer products. However, given that most of the mass media are private, free enterprise businesses with a need to show a profit, I don't believe it appropriate for us to question their motives. Rather it is appropriate for us to monitor the quality of their products.

To that end, I urge the City Council to recognize, by proclamation, when appropriate, those media works which are of exceptional quality in addressing family issues, or age-related issues.

Another step the City Council might take would be to offer to representatives of mass media the opportunity to either interview city employees, such as Adult Protective Services workers, or to allow those people or have those people available to review script prior to publication or production for accuracy. When I was a research consultant at the gerontology center at USC, Norman Lear always used to send his "All in the Family" scripts to us if they dealt with a nursing home or an age related issue. He did not necessarily follow all of our suggestions but he got that expert feedback, and I think the city, offering to open up certain employees and what they might offer to make a show richer and have more depth would be an important step.

Finally, and most importantly, the city should work with various forms of media, various stations on PSA's -- public service announcements -- about health and social services trying to eliminate the kinds of barriers I spoke of earlier -- cultural barriers, language barriers, transportation or access barriers, time barriers. Are the clinics open at time when a working person can get to them? And finally, to work with the stations to make sure that any PSA's that are put on the air are put on in a time slot surrounding or during a show which is watched by that group which you are targeting with that PSA. I thank you for allowing me to testify and if there are any questions I would be glad to take them.

THOMAS FRANK COLEMAN: I have a comment, number one, and look forward to getting your written remarks to put in the record. Secondly, another compliment: I was really wondering, given the City's limited jurisdiction what you would come up with in terms of recommendations and I think your recommendations are right on target. I think there are things the city can do, that we can help implement those recommendations so its the most insightful presentation as far as what the city can do that I can imagine..

JAY WESTBROOK: Thank you. It is a ticklish area because, as I said, those are businesses and as little as we like to admit it, they're there for one reason and that's to make money.

THOMAS FRANK COLEMAN: One thing that does fall in the City's jurisdiction also is the cable franchise area and most of your remarks were on commercial television.

JAY WESTBROOK: I think cable is doing a wonderful job. There are shows on health, public television has "Modern Maturity," "WISE," which is Westside Independent Services to the Elderly, and Santa Monica has a show on cable. There are many, many shows, interview shows that have guests dealing with aging or age related issues and I think that cable has just brought that many more stations to the forefront and you will see a greater diversity of programming.

JAY KOHORN: Just one comment: it occurred to me while you were speaking that the media and the arts are the educators to the mass general public which gives support and direction to what government and business ultimately do, so I think that its important that the media and the arts are slightly ahead of where government and politics are. And the point is that so often these lawyers try to get the courts and the legislators to do things that the public doesn't support yet and the courts are slow to respond because we haven't worked to get that groundswell of support and that's where the media comes into play.

JAY WESTBROOK: I understand what you're saying. As long as it's done properly, for example, if you sensationalize elder abuse and the knee jerk reaction -- that of the public -- is to outcry, and the knee jerk reaction of Sacramento is to pass mandatory reporting laws, do those really do any good if there isn't money for counseling and prosecution. Or do they steal dollars from what otherwise may be applied to counseling or prosecutory programs?

CAROL GILL: This is mostly a comment: I was interested in what you said about being a consultant and a researcher for gerontology centers because it reminded me of the kind of consultation that is done on films and other media presentations about disability. One of the possible problems of that, with all due respect, is that the ultimate experts are the people who are old or the people who are disabled.

JAY WESTBROOK: I disagree. I absolutely disagree 100%. You can be as uninformed about aging, 100% uninformed about aging, and be 90 years old and not have any idea what is involved in the aging process, what programs are out there to make that process smoother, or harder. They know it does not make you an expert in gerontology any more than being disabled makes you an expert on access. It depends in fact on what you have done with your life and how much you have educated yourself. A Black person, by virtue of being black, is not an expert on racial relations.

CAROL GILL: I absolutely agree with you that there are uninformed or nonconsiderate people in those groups, but the truth is that's true of experts as well and I have encountered a great many experts who have no insight into the experience of the people with whom they work and the people that they've studied.

JAY WESTBROOK: That's true. At U.S.C., when Norman Lear's scripts came in, they were reviewed by people such as myself who are experts in gerontology, in communication and media, and by the Andrus Volunteers, the group of elderly persons involved at the gerontology center.

CAROL GILL: My point is that the consumer is often overlooked when media go out and ask for consultants. And I think that's probably the problem that we share -- those in the aging community and those in the disability community. So, although I'm glad that you are there to do consulting, my concern is -- let's not leave it there.

JAY WESTBROOK: It was a team of consultants, not an individual process.

CHRISTOPHER McCAULEY: Thank you to the witnesses who are still in the room. We appreciate it. Thank you to all the Task Force members who survived with lasting enthusiasm through a long afternoon of testimony,