

Testimony for the Labor, Health, and Social Services Joint  
Interim Committee Meeting January 9, 2006-Partnerships for  
Children Families and Individuals

Chairman Osborn and Chairman Scott, We are Al and Sheryl Schmidt. We represent Homeschoolers of Wyoming, a state wide homeschool organization.

We are homeschooling parents. We have one son still at home and have graduated 3 children. As homeschooling parents and now grandparents we are very interested in anything that affects children and families.

We sent the committee members an e-mail over the weekend expressing some concerns we have with the Partnerships for children, families, and individuals draft. We know that there are children and families that need help and should be helped. We just want to make sure that in the process of seeking help for these dysfunctional families the government does not infringe on the liberties of "traditional" core families.

We have attended a number of the Children and Families Initiative meetings. It appeared that the majority of the attendees were either direct government employees or from organizations receiving government monies. Very few seemed to be representing truly "traditional" core families which would constitute the foundation of our communities.

Of all of the problems that the Children and Families Initiative has identified there seems to be two that are the core problems, drugs and alcohol. The rest seem to be symptoms of the core problems. These are not just problems of the teen. We believe that if these 2 problems were addressed most of the child abuse, domestic violence, teenage drinking, etc. would take care of itself. We already have laws in place to address these symptoms.

We would like to see Wyoming encourage business growth, bring good paying jobs to our great state so that husbands could support their families without the wife being compelled to work. We would not have so much trouble with our youth if they were supervised by parents at home and not left to be latch key kids. "All" children are CHINS children, Children IN Need of Supervision, particularly supervised by parents. Proverbs 29:15 says, "...a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame."

We are sure that Governor Freudenthal, Mr. McDaniel, and the Children and Families Initiative desire the best for the families of our state. We just want to encourage the Legislature to proceed with caution as they consider this and all other legislation as to the effect it will have on the state's "traditional" families as well as those in need. A good foundation is important for the future generations.

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