

Health & Science



Clinton Promises To Increase AIDS Fight

President Bill Clinton has vowed to redouble his administration's efforts to find a cure for AIDS and warned against any moves in Congress to cut related government spending.

At the first-ever White House conference on AIDS and HIV, the virus that causes the fatal disease, Clinton said he had ordered the preparation of a government-wide research plan, including a coordinated research budget, within 90 days.

He also said he had asked Vice President Al Gore to convene a meeting of scientists and pharmaceutical industry leaders to study ways of speeding up the development of vaccines, therapeutics and other ways of protecting people from HIV and the

infections it causes.

"There are no guarantees in science, of course, but the collective will of government and industry can overcome huge obstacles, as we have seen just in the last few years," the president said.

AIDS is now the leading killer of Americans between the ages of 25 and 44, with new infections growing fastest among young people, women and ethnic minorities. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported recently that the 500,000th American had been diagnosed with AIDS and more than 300,000 have died.

Worldwide, the World Health Organization estimates there have been 4.5 million AIDS cases and 18

million adults and 1.5 million children are infected with HIV.

After Clinton's opening remarks to the conference he took part for more than an hour in a discussion of needle-sharing among addicts, mandatory AIDS testing and pediatric AIDS.

More than 250 people attended the daylong conference, which drew a couple of dozen protesters to the White House gates to push for greater funding of AIDS research. As Clinton prepared to leave the Treasury Department, where the session was held, a heckler in the room shouted his disapproval of what the administration had done so far.

"I am very sorry that there is not

a cure. I am very sorry that there is not a vaccine," Clinton replied, adding: "We will never be happy until we have solved the problem."

He seized the opportunity to urge the Republican-led Congress to maintain the Medicaid safety net, one of the programs threatened by efforts to balance the federal budget.

Medicaid pays for the care of nearly half of all Americans with AIDS, including more than 90 percent of the children.

"Medicaid is the lifeline of support," Clinton said. "It is the one thing that we have done that has helped us to drive down infant mortality among poor people who otherwise would never see a doctor."

Humane Society Seeks Food And Litter Donations

Dog food supplies are running low and the cats are begging for more kitty litter at the Oregon Humane Society. "We're looking for help from anyone who can donate high quality dry dog food and any type of clay litter for the cats," said Karen Brittain.

The needed food will be used by the animals in residence at the Society as well as provided, on a short-term basis, to families who temporarily cannot afford to feed their pets. The pet food outreach program ensures that more than 500 animals each year are able to stay with their owners instead of being relinquished to the Society. "This

not only helps out the families, it helps to keep our animal population down. The last thing we want is for someone who's having a hard time to have to give up their animal because they can't afford to buy them food. A situation like that only places someone in that situation under more stress," said Brittain.

Donations of quality dry dog food and kitty litter will be gratefully accepted at the Oregon Humane Society at 1067 NE Columbia Blvd. in Portland. Donations can be dropped off in the receiving room from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday. Telephone 503-285-7722.

Restaurants Tested For Healthy Eats

The nutrition group known for finding the fat in some of America's favorite foods finally found something it can swallow.

"We ate it all," said nutritionist Jayne Hurley as the Center for Science in the Public Interest disclosed it had finally found some restaurant fare it approved of - more or less.

The nutrition group, known for exposes of popular foods ranging from movie popcorn to fettuccine Alfredo, surveyed 50 of the nation's largest sit-down restaurant chains and found that seven had devoted sections of their menus to "guiltless," "lite" or "fit fare."

Independent laboratory analyses of those foods found they were indeed lower in fat and healthier than "regular" options. And the center's subjective taste tests found they were "delicious" and more interesting than a plain slab of grilled chicken that

some eateries offer as healthful fare.

The chains are Big Boy's, Chi-Chi's, Chili's, Denny's, El Torito, Olive Garden and T.G.I. Friday's.

"These meals are far better than similar items offered off the regular menu," Hurley said. "In general, you get fewer calories, less fat and saturated fat, and more vegetables."

Not that they were perfect. The meals tended to be high in sodium, and some had higher fat than the menu advertised, perhaps because cooks and servers at individual restaurants around the country were not following corporate headquarters' guidelines about how to keep "lite" alternatives healthy.

Healthy options are important in restaurants since Americans eat out so much. Typically people spend almost as much eating out as they do on groceries, said Michael Jacobson, the center's director.

The group singled out a few entrees as particularly good, such as T.G.I. Friday's "Lite Pacific Coast Tuna," a meal of fresh-grilled tuna, sauce and vegetables heaped on linguine, or Olive Garden's "Garden Fare Capellini Primavera."

But it faulted "lite" chicken quesadillas at Chi-Chi's and El Torito.

"It's still better than a regular cheese quesadilla but that's not saying much. In terms of fat, it's the difference between two McDonald's Quarter Pounders and three."

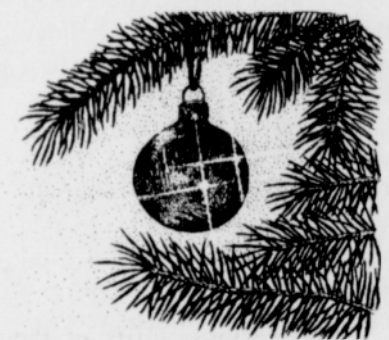
Overall, though, the nutrition watchdogs were impressed.

"The bottom line on this story is good news," Jacobson said. "Some of the major restaurant chains in America are taking their customers health to heart and we applaud them for doing so."

Phoenix Rising and the Partnership project are sponsoring a support group for Men of color who are HIV+. The group meets Bi-Weekly and is supported by the Title I Ryan White Act. The group is client-motivated and is charged with empowering participants to take charge of their lives.

Through camaraderie and professional intervention, participants realize their own strength to stay in control of their lives. It is a place where people learn about resources within their community and how to access them.

To find out more please call Theo Harper at Phoenix Rising: 223-8299, or Andre Pruitt at the Partnership project: 295-0211.



Education

Books With African American Values

Thomas Brown and Ricky Jack wanted to find books for their children that portrayed African Americans positively and that stressed moral values.

Instead, what they found were predominantly white characters who didn't resemble their kids. The books they found aimed at black children weren't much better. One was the story of Hansel and Gretel - the only difference was that the children were black instead of white.

Some books depicted black children stereotypically, with bug eyes, huge lips and messy hair.

"We didn't think what we found was as good as it could be," Jack said. What's more, "a lot of the books didn't have moral themes to them," Brown said.

Brown and Jack realized what they were looking for could be found in the treasure trove of stories their families told them when they were young boys.

Brown has fond memories of those stories, especially those told

by his great-grandmother, who sat him on her knee in her rocking chair, read the Bible to him and told him stories she had learned during her childhood.

When Brown wrote down the many childhood stories he remembered, he and Jack realized that they had a marketable product that could benefit other African American families and their kids.

Brown and Jack each chipped in \$5,000 last March to start Jack Brown Enterprises, which publishes children's books with moral themes aimed at blacks.

There's a great need for African American kids to have books they can identify with, said Phyllis Fogelman, publisher of Dial Books for Young Readers in New York. Among other things, the company specializes in publishing books aimed at blacks.

"I think you get a sense of yourself as a child and your place in the world by a lot of things," she said. "If you're black and you see only white

faces, it leaves a very left-out feeling, particularly in minority children, who come up against prejudice all the time."

It's equally important for white children to see African American families leading successful, normal lives, Fogelman said.

Brown, vice president of the company, is the creative arm, writing the stories and handling product development. Brown's wife, Barbara Tompkins-Brown, is the marketing director.

Brown adopted the pen name "Zachary X. King." He likes the name Zachary and took on the initial X and the surname King in honor of black leaders Malcolm X and Martin Luther King.

Jack is company president, handling most of the business aspects of the company and his wife, Germaine, is customer relations manager.

They knew that their inexperience at publishing made it crucial that they learn about the industry.

Parents Rank Jobs Skills Important

In a national study, more than two-thirds of parents believe their children need to start taking specialized courses and making career decisions as early as middle school and definitely by the first two years of high school.

Similarly, parents overwhelmingly prefer an education that includes occupational skills and structured work experiences to a purely academic education.

In fact, a majority of parents ranked work skills as the single most important preparation for earning a living, not only above technical skills and course work like science and history, but even above basic skills like reading and math.

Parents also want to adopt new ways of assessing and motivating students by holding them more accountable for the skills it takes to get and keep a job. By an almost four-to-one margin, parents said that schools should develop a "certificate of completion" that would contain grades, teacher recommendations and ratings for work habits, such as punctu-

ality, attendance, ability to work with others and a record of completing assignments.

Support for this kind of substitute for the traditional diploma extends across the socioeconomic spectrum with non-whites being most supportive.

The 1995 "Chrysler Learning Connection Report: Transition from School to Work" found that parents are very concerned about their children making the transition from school to work.

Overall, 44 percent of parents say they have talked to their children "lots of times" and another 27 percent "fairly often" about possible jobs and careers and what it takes to succeed in the workplace.

Additionally, the study found parents are just as likely to talk to their daughters about careers as their sons. Even though some parents are beginning to question the job market for young college graduates, 60 percent of all parents believe that young people with a college degree have a

better chance than young people who have graduated from technical or vocational school to buy a house and save money for retirement.

Just 36 percent of parents say their schools are doing a good job with vocational and technical education; only 30 percent say their school is doing a good job of work and career counseling.

"The sea-change in the world of work occurring in the global marketplace is the driving force behind the school-to-work movement," said Dr. Valerie Becker, Chrysler's National Education Programs Administrator. "Working together, the business and education community can develop experiences that strengthen personal responsibility, team work and problem solving."

The 1995 report is the fourth annual report conducted for the Chrysler Learning Connection, a partnership of Chrysler Corp., the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development and the American Federation of Teachers.

Holiday Event Draws 600 Area Kids

Continued from front

choices and decisions," and that "utilizing their listening skills" was far more important than any of his professional tools.

"Using your mind in far more important than using a gun in a crisis," Foxworth said.

The long lines continued, as the guests waited patiently for the gifts, donated by the local community at "giving trees" from area malls and

other programs.

California Pizza Kitchen also donated free pizzas. Mounds of decorated Christmas packages had the youngsters in awe and rows of volunteers stood at attention delivering presents to the happy rambunctious children. Nearly 1,500 gifts were collected for the event.

In other holiday activities, Oregon State Defense and Salvation Army volunteers, will deliver food boxes containing traditional Christ-

mas foods to needy residents. A Christmas day dinner will also be served at the Moore Street Center, with nearly 500 dinners expected to be served.

"Katherine" from Lynden Farms in north Portland is spearheading the dinner and asks for further donations of turkeys, hams and food products. Volunteers are also requested.

The Salvation Army Moore Street Center can be reached at 239-1241.

State Literature Scholarship

through the use of literature in the home.

Eligibility & Requirements: A \$10 entry fee includes a 1 year membership to American Mothers, Inc.

Contact: Audrey Kocamik, State Chairman, at 13630 SW Fielding Rd., Lake Oswego, OR 97034. For entry

form with a list of eligibility and qualifications. All entry forms must be in by February 1, 1996.

Categories: #1. Poetry; #2. Short Stories; #3. Essays; #4. Articles.

Announcement of winners will take place on February 24th 1996, at the 1996 Banquet.

Gertrude Fogelson Cultural and Creative Arts Program: American Mothers, Inc. encourages mothers to develop their talents in the creative arts. The Cultural and Creative Arts program can be a positive force in helping young mothers learn more effective ways of teaching children