

innovation

at work for America's children



The Children's
Partnership

A 10 Year Progress Report from The Children's Partnership

ALAN KAY

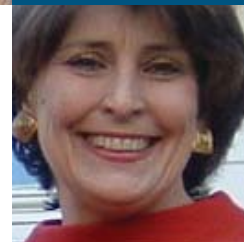
*Fellow, The Hewlett-Packard Company
Advisor, The Children's Partnership*

“The best way to predict the future

is to invent it.”

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Dear Friends,

Ten years ago, we set out to help invent a future

where all children would have health insurance and wouldn't need to go to an emergency room to treat a simple ear infection; where the vast benefits of the emerging digital society would reach even the most disadvantaged child; and where parents, regardless of education or income, could learn to guide their children safely on the Internet.

The Children's Partnership opened its doors a decade ago with these ambitious goals and an equally ambitious mission to develop practical new strategies and policies to achieve them.

We are pleased to issue this report on our first 10 years of work for children and families. In this report you will find descriptions of extensive *original research* we have produced, stories of *demonstration programs for youth* that now stand as *best practices in our field*, and examples of building *broad consensus for a public policy and advocacy agenda*. Finally, and most importantly, you will read about the *results* for children and families—results achieved in concert with a wide array of colleagues.

While we are pleased to report on progress made, so much more needs to be done. We are ready to build upon what has been accomplished. And, we are committed to continuing to develop new strategies for change.

We thank all those with whom we have worked side by side these last 10 years—families and young people, community and civic leaders, public and private partners, and our supporters and staff. We look forward to the opportunity to accomplish more, together, for children and families in the coming decade.

Wendy Lazarus and Laurie Lipper

Founders and Presidents

our mission

“I have known The Children's Partnership since the founders started the group ten years ago. They have made important contributions to improve the lives of low-income children.”

Robert Greenstein
*Founder and Executive Director,
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities*

The Children's Partnership (TCP) is a national, nonprofit organization working to ensure that all children—especially those at risk of being left behind—have the resources and the opportunities they need to grow up healthy and lead productive lives.

The Children's Partnership focuses particular attention on the goals of securing health coverage for uninsured children and ensuring that the opportunities and benefits of digital technology reach all children and families. With input from its advisors, The Children's Partnership advances its goals by combining national research with community-based activities. TCP then develops policy and advocacy agendas to expand these demonstrated solutions to underserved communities around the country.

In this way, TCP serves as a “research and development arm” for the children's movement and expands the reach of child advocacy to new issues and new audiences.

At its inception 10 years ago, The Children's Partnership established four principles to guide its work:

- *The Children's Partnership will focus on issues that can positively affect significant numbers of children and their families in the United States;*
- *The Children's Partnership will advocate on issues where it can make unique contributions—without duplicating the work of other child advocates;*
- *The Children's Partnership will hold itself to definable outcomes and to maintaining the highest possible quality standards in its work; and*
- *The Children's Partnership will run a well-managed, fiscally sound business and high-quality workplace.*

how we work

Our model for change rarely unfolds in an orderly or predictable way. However, these are the building blocks of our approach:

Braintrust

We consult a wide range of experts to identify trends and issues where there may be a strategic opening for new approaches to benefit children and families in underserved communities.

(See the list of Advisors, pages 14-15.)

Independent Research Base

The Children's Partnership undertakes a range of independent and original research. In 1994, we developed the "Strategic Audit," a research tool to survey and analyze a broad field undergoing significant changes. This tool allows us to "map" an issue, looking for strategic openings to advance the interests of children. We have used this tool over the years and have found that our research is often the first to define or reframe an issue, serving a seminal research and development function.

Solutions that Work

While The Children's Partnership's research serves to inform a wide audience, it also provides TCP with a solid background from which to begin developing practical solutions. We pilot most of our community and public policy solutions in California, home to one of every eight children in the United States.

Consensus through Partnerships

In the course of developing best practices through our pilot programs, we work with coalitions and partners to develop consensus around ways to extend the effective programs to more underserved communities.

Public Policy and Advocacy

As consensus emerges we again work closely with our community-based colleagues to develop policy ideas and to advocate for them in both public and private sectors. We also use the power of digital technology to communicate, demonstrate models, and advocate.

Lean and Tightly Managed Organization

The Children's Partnership has 13 full- and part-time staff in three offices (Santa Monica and San Francisco, CA and Washington, DC). We are committed to staying small in order to remain flexible in response to new issues and opportunities, benefit from the specialized skills of consultants when needed, and keep our management and overhead streamlined.

1993

The Children's Partnership opens its doors as a project of The Tides Foundation.

1994

Santa Monica office opens.

America's Children & The Information Superhighway released.

1995

Washington, DC office opens.

America's Children and the Changing Health Marketplace initiative launched.

Computers in Our Future, a \$7.3 million initiative to create 11 community technology centers in California, launched.

1996

America's Uninsured Children and the Changing Policy Environment: A Strategic Audit of Activities and Opportunities released.

"Building a Constituency for Children: Community and National Strategies," a Wingspread Conference, held.

The Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway released with the National PTA and the National Urban League.

Childrenpartnership.org launched, awarded *USA Today* Hot Site Award, NetGuide's Gold Award, and outstanding Web site by the Webcrawler Select Editorial Team.

1997

Lessons from History: Building a Movement for America's Children, a monograph by Theda Skocpol, released.

California Youth: Their Access to Computers and Technological Readiness released.

100% Campaign: Health Insurance for Every Child formed with Children's Defense Fund and Children Now.

TCP Featured at White House Summit on Internet and Kids.

1998

Computers In Our Future Centers open in 11 California communities.

Reaching 100% of California's Children with Affordable Health Insurance: A Strategic Audit of Activities and Opportunities released as part of the 100% Campaign.

California's New Health Insurance Program for Children: What the Small Business Owner Should Know released.

1999

TCP joins with advocates and industry to launch GetNetWise.org, an online safety information site for parents.

TCP, with the 100% Campaign, gains streamlined health insurance enrollment process for uninsured kids and increases number of kids eligible.

TCP launches Express Lane Eligibility Initiative with release of *Express Lane Eligibility: How to Enroll Large Groups of Eligible Children in Medicaid and CHIP*.

2000

Online Content for Low-Income and Underserved Americans: The Digital Divide's New Frontier released.

Putting Express Lane Eligibility Into Practice released in conjunction with the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured.

highlights

2001

First Express Lane Eligibility bills (AB 59-Cedillo and SB 493-Sher) signed into law.

Young Americans and the Digital Future Campaign begins and Techpolicybank.org launches.

Healthy Families: Family Health Insurance Through One Door released.

2002

Contentbank.org Web site launches.

First community technology advocacy day held in Sacramento, with over 100 supporters.

Pathways to Our Future: A Multimedia Training Program for Youth That Works released.

First community technology bill (SB 1863-Bowen) signed into law.

TCP launches Expresslane.info Web site.

2003

WiredSafety.org presents TCP with Internet Visionary Award.

TCP and The California Endowment hold press event to launch Express Lane, attended by Governor and First Lady.

The Search for High-Quality Online Content for Low-Income and Underserved Communities released.

Express Lane Eligibility is implemented in five California school districts.

Digital Divide Grant Program created through legislation (AB 855-Firebaugh & Levine).

Children Falling Through the Health Insurance Cracks released.

Closing Health Insurance Gaps for Families: WIC Can Help Make It Happen released.

TCP turns 10 years old.



digital opportunity

for all communities

The Digital Gap

While the Internet transforms the nature of opportunity in the workplace, schools, and society, millions of families and young people are not able to benefit from the digital revolution. The goal of The Children's Partnership's program is to make sure that digital opportunities extend to all communities, particularly those who are low income and underserved.

- Number of the fastest growing occupations that are computer related: 8 out of 10
- Percentage more earned by workers who use computers than those who don't: Roughly 20%
- Percentage of white young people who use the Internet: 80%
- Percentage of black young people who use the Internet: 52%
- Percentage of Hispanic young people who use the Internet: 48%
- Percentage of youth in very low-income households who use the Internet: 46%

For William, a student

Independent Research Base

Charting a Course for Child Advocacy in a New Issue Area: The First Strategic Audit

In 1994, TCP published the first comprehensive analysis of how new technologies would impact children: *America's Children & The Information Superhighway: A Briefing Book and National Action Agenda* (1994 and updated in 1996, 1998, and 1999). This report was followed by *California Youth: Their Access to Computers and Technological Readiness* (July 1997).

Solutions that Work

Building Best Practice Models in California Communities

Building on this solid research base, we partnered with others to help organize an innovative network of 11 community-based technology centers in California, called Computers in Our Future. This groundbreaking project, which pioneered strategies to disseminate technology into low-income communities, trained more than 25,000 participants in the use of new media over a four-year period. The program, supported by The California Wellness Foundation, and carried out in partnership with CompuMentor, Community Partners, and 11 community technology programs across California, was formally evaluated and serves as a model for programs around the country.

Consensus through Partnerships

A Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway

In 1996, The Children's Partnership, in conjunction with the National PTA and the National Urban League, published the comprehensive *Parents' Guide to the Information Superhighway: Rules and Tools for Families Online*. Nearly a million copies of the guide have been distributed to parents (in print and online) and through partnerships with MSNBC, the American Library Association, AOL, the Lutheran Church, and many others. This first-of-its-kind guide has been translated into four languages (Spanish, Italian, French, and German) and won a Computerworld/Smithsonian Award for "Visionary Use of Information Technology in the Field of Education and Academia."

Research and Development

Online Content is the Digital Divide's New Frontier

In 2000, The Children's Partnership launched a new area of research and advocacy by identifying the "online content gap" between what's needed and what's available online for low-income and other Internet users with limited-literacy and English-language skills. We published *Online Content For Low-Income and Underserved Americans: The Digital Divide's New Frontier* in 2000 (updated in 2002), and based on this research, The Children's Partnership launched a Web resource on the topic in 2002, Contentbank.org.

In 2003, our report, *The Search for High-Quality Online Content for Low-Income and Underserved Communities: Evaluating and Producing What's Needed*, included an examination of 100 sets of content evaluation guidelines from the fields of education, online privacy, usability, consumer rights, accessibility, health, literacy, and cultural content. We found an emerging consensus

in Los Angeles, using computers to learn

graphic design and multimedia skills changed his life perspective and goals. Before training at a community technology center called the Bresee Foundation, he was not enrolled in school. Thanks to his new technology skills, he was able to get a job at the Bresee Foundation, providing assistance to younger students who come to learn computers. He earned a college scholarship from Bresee and now attends Cal State Northridge. William is the first in his family to attend college, where he is majoring in computer science. He plans to open up his own graphic design company and to set the standard for his family that college is an option.

(Real name not used. See page 16 for source.)

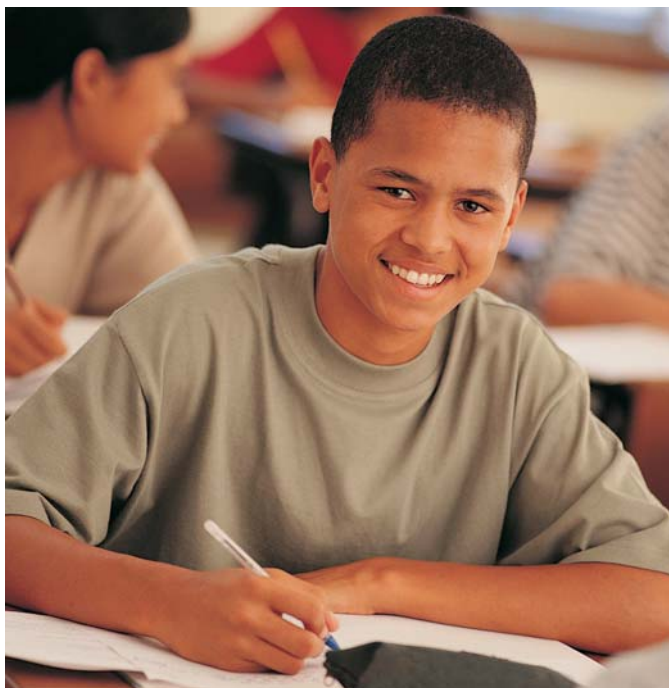
around baseline requirements for quality content but discovered that the existing guidelines often neglect to address the needs of low-income and other underserved individuals. We then developed a starter set of guidelines to encourage the development of needed content.

Public Policy and Advocacy

Coalition is Model of Grassroots Advocacy

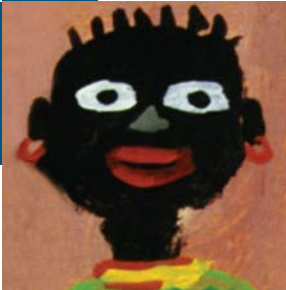
Since the beginning of our digital opportunity program—and as a high-priority part of our work with Computers in Our Future—The Children’s Partnership has joined with community leaders and elected officials throughout California to deliver the promise of technology to disadvantaged communities. As part of a statewide coalition of 200 organizations called the California Community Technology Policy Group (CCTPG), TCP has helped build a state-based advocacy model to effect public policy changes. Public policies that have resulted from this work include the following:

- *Passed in 2002, Providing Advanced Telecommunications Services in Low-Income Communities (SB 1863-Senator Bowen) is legislation in which “community technology program” was defined and established in state law. The new law also allows community technology programs to get the discounted rate for telecommunications.*



“The Children’s Partnership’s research and programs have been important catalysts for understanding the gap between those who benefit from technology and those who do not and for advancing a comprehensive agenda to strengthen underserved communities.”

Dr. Randal Pinkett
President and CEO, BCT Partners



- Passed in 2003, the Digital Divide Grant Program (AB 855-Assemblymembers Firebaugh and Levine) is the first in the nation to establish a sustainable and dedicated fund for community-based technology programs in underserved neighborhoods. The coalition worked with the wireless carriers on this legislation.
- Passed in 2003, Connecting to Internet 2 to Improve Educational Achievement (SB 720-Senator Bowen) is a first step in linking the rich educational content and high-speed Internet connection now available to educational institutions (called Internet 2) to neighborhood organizations in low-income communities.

Using the Power of Technology

Techpolicybank.org

Techpolicybank (www.techpolicybank.org) is a Web site that provides practical information and strategies for policy and community leaders in cities and states who want to ensure digital opportunity for all youth and their families. It has up-to-date statistics, successful policy models, research, and updates on policy breakthroughs around the country.

Contentbank.org

The Contentbank Web site (www.contentbank.org) is dedicated to promoting the development of online content for and by low-income and underserved communities. The site features in-depth profiles of programs from around the country, quality resources in areas like jobs and health, as well as the latest news and research from the content field.

Internet Visionary Award

In 2003, The Children's Partnership received WiredKids.org's Internet Visionary Award, given for the first time ever to a nonprofit organization. "While many of us are cited as the leaders in online safety, we are mere followers when Wendy Lazarus and Laurie Lipper are concerned. They understood the issues before most of us had even heard of the Internet," said Parry Aftab, Executive Director.

Results by the Numbers

This notable progress reflects The Children's Partnership's work in conjunction with other leaders and partners:

- Percentage increase in low-income families' use of the Internet from 1997 to 2001: 172%
- Gap still remaining: 25% of low-income Americans use the Internet versus 79% of higher-income Americans
- Percentage increase in number of community technology centers during past four years: Over 200%
- Increase in percentage of documents on the Internet in a language other than English: From 13% in 2000, to 30% in 2002
- Number of partners in California working on digital opportunity policy: 200 and growing
- Number of California laws passed to help increase digital opportunity: 6
- Estimated money generated in California's Digital Divide Fund: \$3-6 million annually
- Number of *Parents' Guides* distributed: More than 950,000
- Number of languages into which the *Parents' Guide* has been translated: 4
- Regular Contentbank usage: Over 135,000 visits annually



health

insurance

for every child

The Health Insurance Gap

Despite irrefutable evidence that health insurance is children's ticket to getting basic health care, millions of children—especially those whose parents are working at low-wage jobs—remain uninsured today. The goal of our program is to assure that every child has health insurance coverage and that it is easy for them to enroll, use health services, and stay insured.

- Number of children who are uninsured in US: 9 million (one in every eight)
- Number of children in California who are uninsured: 1 million
- Percentage of uninsured children in California and nationally who are eligible for public health insurance programs but are uninsured: Nearly 70%
- Percentage of California children in public health insurance who lose their insurance within one year of enrolling: Nearly 40%
- Percentage improvement in child's health if insured: 25%
- Percentage improvement in keeping up with school activities and paying attention in class if insured: 68%

Lucia, a child from Salinas, California,

developed an eye infection, a common and easily treatable condition in children. However, she was unable to obtain treatment because her family did not have health insurance. Although Lucia's infection was initially treatable, Lucia lost vision in the infected eye because of the length of time it took to have the eye infection properly diagnosed and treated. Lucia was also forced to repeat one full year of school. *(Real name not used. See page 16 for source).*



Independent Research Base

Strategic Audits Chart New Directions

Published in February 1996, *America's Uninsured Children and the Changing Policy Environment: A Strategic Audit of Activities and Opportunities* is credited with helping tilt decision-makers toward the eventual passage of 1997 federal legislation that made up to 5 million children of working parents eligible for health insurance. Our Strategic Audit for California, *Reaching 100% of California's Children with Affordable Health Insurance*, published in 1998 with our partners Children Now and Children's Defense Fund, provided a road map for actions that public and private sectors could take to reach children who lacked health insurance. And most recently, our *Children Falling Through the Health Insurance Cracks* report defined the new and widespread challenge of keeping children covered once they get health insurance and laid out a practical plan for remedying the problems.

Research and Development

Express Enrolling Children into Health Insurance

With so many children already eligible for public health insurance, yet still not enrolled, in 1998, The Children's Partnership began a research and development program to explore ways to streamline the system and "express" millions of children into health coverage. "Express Lane Eligibility" (ELE) emerged as an innovative policy idea that makes it easier for parents to sign up their children for public health insurance in schools, child care centers, WIC programs, etc., where large numbers of unenrolled but eligible children are located, something not currently available to most parents. Parents can also use a shorter, simpler enrollment process. There are almost 800,000 uninsured children in California who could be express enrolled into health insurance and as many as 4 million nationally.

Over the next several years, The Children's Partnership published the research that grounds the program. *(See highlights, page 4.)* This research helped build the case for Express Lane Eligibility, and thanks to the leadership of two California state legislators, Express Lane through the school lunch and food stamp programs became state policy with the passage of two laws, (AB 59-Senator Cedillo and SB 493-Senator Sher), in 2001. The laws were signed by then-governor of California, Gray Davis.

In 2002, The Children's Partnership launched the Expresslane.info Web site, the premier source for information on the program, and TCP is currently developing a nuts-and-bolts toolkit to allow school districts in California to more easily develop their own Express Lane Eligibility programs.

Solutions that Work

Pilot Programs to Ensure an Efficient, Effective Approach

In September 2003, The Children's Partnership, in partnership with The California Endowment, launched an Express Lane Eligibility pilot program, and a student at Easterby Elementary School in Fresno, California, became the first child to receive health insurance benefits through Express Lane Eligibility. With our partners in the philanthropic community, teachers, health care providers, technology experts, school food programs, and others, we are currently assisting 70 schools in five school districts across California to pilot Express Lane. The pilot program is structured to identify and implement any needed adjustments, to build support with key constituents, and to ensure that the programs work smoothly before being taken to scale.

Joining Forces with Teachers

TCP has joined forces with the California Teachers Association and the California Association of Health Plans' Teachers for Healthy Kids initiative to help equip California's 330,000 teachers with the information they need to tell parents about free or low-cost health insurance for which their children may be eligible. This effort also enables more than 10,000 teachers to work one-on-one with parents to educate them about available health insurance options.

"I count on The Children's Partnership to find the best levers to accomplish their goals for kids. They know how to spot ripe opportunities for change, and they bring the right skills to deliver on these opportunities."

Kim Belshe
Secretary of California's Health & Human Services Agency

Consensus through Partnerships

Small Business: A Key Ally in Covering All Children

The Children's Partnership works with business leaders on obtaining health insurance coverage for children because most uninsured children have a parent in the workplace, often a small business. In California alone, over 550,000 uninsured children have a parent working in businesses with less than 25 employees; 430,000 of these children are eligible for public insurance but are not enrolled. Focus groups with small business owners indicate an interest in covering employees if the cost and efficiency issues can be resolved. Recognizing the central role employers play in the health marketplace, since 2000 The Children's Partnership has partnered with the California Small Business Association on several projects that connect small businesses with viable health insurance options for employees and their families.



Public Policy and Advocacy

100% Campaign: Health Coverage for Every Child in California

In addition to accelerating enrollment of children through Express Lane Eligibility, The Children's Partnership is joining with others to create the public and political will to ensure health insurance coverage for all children.

Working in the most populous state in the nation with the largest number of uninsured children, we joined forces in 1997 with Children Now and Children's Defense Fund to mount the 100% Campaign. This is a sustained campaign to secure health insurance for every California child. Partnering with small businesses, doctors, teachers, health plans, faith communities, and others, we are building broad support for 100% coverage. This coalition works to keep the issue of health insurance for all children very much in the forefront of policy debates and to press for policy advances, for example:

- *In the late 1990's, the California governor and legislature agreed to expand health insurance to approximately 130,000 additional children and 250,000 additional parents and streamlined the enrollment process for tens of thousands more.*
- *In 2003, an unprecedented fiscal crisis in California required The Children's Partnership to set our sights on protecting health insurance gains previously made. We joined with our partners to fight back cuts to the 3.7 million children enrolled in California's publicly supported health insurance programs.*
- *Besides the children who enroll in coverage through the Express Lane Eligibility program, almost 70,000 children each year benefit from immediate enrollment in health insurance when applying through a new, accelerated enrollment system.*

Using the Power of Technology

Expresslane.info

Expresslane (www.expresslane.info) is an online clearinghouse designed to help people interested in implementing Express Lane in California and beyond. The Web site now includes a wide variety of handy tips and tools that school districts and counties can use, as well as profiles of what other states and cities are doing in this area.

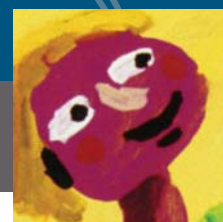
Results by the Numbers

This notable progress reflects The Children's Partnership's work in conjunction with other leaders and partners:

- Percentage of California's children now insured (toward our goal of 100% coverage for children): 89%
- Reduction in the number of pages parents have to fill out to enroll their children in health insurance: 28 to 4 pages
- Estimated number of California children who have benefited from reforms to continue coverage for children for one year after they enroll in state health insurance programs: 470,000
- Percentage increase in enrollment in California's Healthy Families public health insurance program over the past five years: Over 450%
- Number of uninsured children still to be enrolled in Healthy Families: 300,000
- Number of states that have implemented Express Lane programs: 14
- Change in percentage of California's children who are insured since TCP began its work: Roughly 40% increase

A large, light blue outline of a telescope on a tripod is centered in the upper half of the page. Three stylized, light blue stars are scattered in the dark blue background above the telescope. The text 'ahead looking' is written in white, with 'ahead' in a smaller font above 'looking'.

ahead looking



As The Children's Partnership begins its second decade, the country, again, is witnessing profound shifts that affect young people's futures and call for new approaches. Far too many of America's young men and women are not connected to the education and experience they need to succeed, for example:

- Percentage of employment losses in the recent economic downturn that were among young people ages 16-24 (who make up 15% of the total population): Over 50%
- Number and percentage of young people ages 16-24 who are out of school and out of work: More than 5 million, which is 15% of the total youth population
- Number of 18- to 29-year-olds who do not have a high school diploma or a GED: Close to 6 million
- Percentage of Americans who view teenagers in a negative light: 75%

As we have in the past 10 years, The Children's Partnership will research these trends and aim to develop innovative solutions. We look forward to working with our partners in the health and digital technology fields to tackle these issues and together invent a better future for America's children.

National Advisors

Richard S. Atlas
Goldman, Sachs & Co. (Retired)

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PolicyLink

Holly Holmberg Brooks
Highwood Productions

Marlene Canter
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Founder, Action for Children's Television

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McKinsey & Co.

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Street Tech

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Case Story Sources

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“The greatest reward for doing
is the opportunity
to do more.”

The Children’s Partnership
Staff, April 2004

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