

*Marsha's
Do you
think we need
to answer?
Padnit*

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MAY 28 1985
WASHINGTON OFFICE

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ASSOC.

WASHINGTON OFFICE

May 20, 1985

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The Honorable William Lehman
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Lehman;

Last month, the Early Childhood Development Association, Broward County's non-profit provider of child day care services for children of low income working parents, supplied Refugee Resettlement Program subsidized day care services to 224 preschool age children of eligible Haitian clients. The drastic cuts in federal, and consequently state, funding that will take effect July 1, 1985 will reduce that number of children served to zero!

Our agency is reviewing the case records of all of our Haitian clients and attempting to arrange alternative child care placements for these 224 Haitian children. However, our Title XX subsidized day care centers, with a total capacity of 1758 children, has an aggregate waiting list, as of May 1st of 1417 children. There is little chance that waiting lists would move fast enough to accommodate an additional two hundred-plus young children by July 1st.

If Refugee Resettlement Program subsidized day care is not available, parents must either stop working or must leave young children in the care of slightly older brothers and sisters, elderly (and possibly infirm) caregivers, or alone and unsupervised. Workers have discovered small children locked in bathrooms, closets, or tied to furniture because the earnings of desperate parents could not be stretched to pay for child care.

ADVISORY BOARD

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Our agency has provided Haitian parents with child care services that make it possible for them to enroll in job training programs leading to employment and economic self-sufficiency. Several of our Haitian clients, whose children originally received subsidized day care services, are now employed and able to pay their child care fees. With over 1500 Haitian babies born in Broward County this year, 1300 last year and 1600 projected for next year, it does not appear that child care needs for the county's 45,000 entrants and refugees will diminish in the near future.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Patrice Wooppel

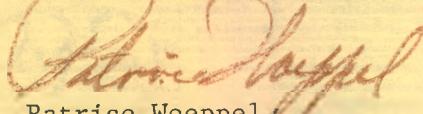
4137 NORTH STATE ROAD SEVEN (305) 486-3900
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33319

In 1984-85 targeted assistance for Refugee and Entrant Programs in Florida was \$15,897,951. Broward County received \$571,848. Next year Broward County expects to receive \$105,000. Dade County will receive \$11,000,000 in Federal targeted assistance for 1985-86. It is imperative that Federal dollars be allocated specifically to Broward County to provide training and support services for its 45,000 refugee and entrant residents.

The three year limitation on Federal assistance for refugees and entrants presumes full acculturation within that time frame. The Haitians who have emigrated to south Florida have had to learn a new language and accustom themselves to urban living. The only employment available to them has been the minimum wage service occupations: dishwashing, janitorial work, and other unskilled day labor. With rising inflation, both parents must work just to meet day-to-day living expenses. The Haitians are an industrious people willing to learn the job skills they need for stable employment. Continued Federal assistance to help refugees and entrants become economically self-sufficient can eliminate the necessity for future welfare subsidies. I urge you to support an extension of Federal funding for refugee and entrant programs for impacted areas such as Broward County.

Sincerely,

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION



Patrice Woeppel
Executive Director

PW/td