

## Creating quality child care

*Inconsistent licensing standards can create a two-tiered system*

Diane Neighbors,  
Director, Hospital Child Care Center

The provision of quality child care has evolved from a welfare mother's problem to a women's issue to a national debate during the past three decades. An overlay to this debate has been the question of how to provide quality care and education for all income levels and not create a two-tiered delivery system. Providing quality child care and early childhood education programs for all income levels benefits the children enrolled, their families, and society as a whole.

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HISTORICALLY,  
WOMEN HAVE  
DEVELOPED  
SPECIAL  
FORMS OF  
CHILD CARE  
TO FIT  
THEIR NEEDS.

COZY,  
BUT CRAMPED.

As more women entered the work force, families of all income levels began to demand quality, full-time child care services. Historically, government involvement in the provision of child care has been limited to times of national crisis and emergency situations. Welfare and war have been the primary reasons for government support of our involvement in child care. Programs were established during the Civil War, the Great Depression, and World War II in order for women to enter the work force or seek employment. Yet, once the crisis had ended, the expectation was that mothers would return to their homes and care for their children.

During the past two decades, gov-

ernment support for child care has come in the form of Head Start, AFDC, tax credits, and Title XX. Recently, efforts at welfare reform such as the JOBS (Job Opportunity and Basic Skills) program, have provided additional support for child care services. Yet, some question the quality of the care offered or demanded by some of the options available to parents.

What began as the Act for Better Child Care in 1988, passed in 1990 as the Early Childhood Education and Development Act. In its final form the legislation did not mandate standards. Special interest groups and some state governments lobbied to eliminate standards (regulations) from the legislation as they debated issues of religious freedom and states' rights.

Currently, licensing standards vary greatly from state to state, as does support for the regulation of early childhood programs. Strong standards which require quality care and standards which are strictly enforced may be the only way to guarantee quality services for children from all income levels. Licensing should not be viewed as an invasion of privacy but as a form of consumer protection and quality assurance. Licensing standards and government regulation of child care programs help ensure that children's rights are protected regardless of family income.



SO WHAT'S  
WRONG WITH  
GOVERNMENT  
REGULATIONS?  
WITHOUT THEM  
I WOULDN'T  
HAVE THIS  
CAR SEAT.

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Historically, the family has been viewed as autonomous and government intervention was considered abnormal. The attitude has been that government should not become involved with families except in cases of parental failure or during crisis situations. Some argue that the government does have a responsibility to children and families to provide support services in order to avoid parental failure and family crisis.

The key components of quality care have been defined as low adult-child ratios, small group/class size, and trained, qualified, consistent staff. Quality programs are developmentally



CINDY  
BROWN

appropriate and view parents as partners in meeting the needs of the child. Few states have licensing standards which adequately address these issues.

The National Association for the Education of Young Children offers guidelines for the provision of quality care and education for infants through eight-year-old children through the National Academy of Early Childhood Programs. In the NAEYC Accreditation Guide is perhaps the landmark research-based tool for evaluating programs and defining quality. Participation in the accreditation process is voluntary, unlike licensing which is usually mandated by states.

—see *QUALITY*, page 2



*Quality child care should  
be available for all children*

—from page 1

A license does not guarantee quality care or a developmentally appropriate program. The primary purpose of licensing is to protect children by imposing minimum requirements related to the health, safety, and supervision of children. Children deserve more than the minimum.

Some suggest that the deregulation of child care programs would increase the supply of services available to families and that parents should regulate the programs serving their children. Parents do need expanded options for care but children need basic protection when enrolled in care outside the home. Yet, whose responsibility is it to guarantee quality for all children?

While it may be unreasonable for government to provide direct subsidy for all children in child care, government could provide equity for all children by enforcing consistent licensing standards for programs without exemptions or waivers. Without strong regulations, the current delivery system may indeed be creating two tiers of child care: quality care for those who can afford it and custodial, often unregulated care, for those who cannot. ■



**"Thanx for the Sacrifice," 1992**

Sarratt Gallery presents "Reverent/Irreverent," a juried exhibit which includes works by 55 artists, from January 7 - 27, 1993. Opening reception: January 7, 4 - 6 p.m. The exhibit will include "Thanx for the Sacrifice," a mixed media piece by Jennifer Swartz.

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### Women's VU

published monthly September through June by the Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center, Vanderbilt University, Franklin Building, West Side Row. Mailing address: Box 1513 Station B, Nashville, TN 37235.

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### EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Educational Testing Service in Princeton, New Jersey, announces 1993-94 Postdoctoral Fellowship Program and National Assessment of Educational Progress Visiting Scholar Program as well as Summer Internships. An explicit goal of the programs is to increase the number of women and minority professionals in educational measurement and related fields. Deadline for application is February 1, 1993. Details available at the Cuninggim Center.



*"Homage To My Mothers"*

### ART EXHIBIT

Pat Smith, local artist and teacher, will exhibit recent work at the Margaret Cuninggim Center in January and February. Her fluid line drawings connect flora and fauna with human forms and evoke images of Africa and the Caribbean. Smith believes that the artist's subjective experience shapes the art. She encourages her students to draw or paint from their own experience and to allow their own thoughts and feelings to inform their work.

A "Conversation with the Artist" is scheduled for February 4, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

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1993

Calendar  
of  
Events

Margaret  
Cunninggim  
Women's  
Center



Please save and post. Individual flyers for these programs will not be sent.

For further information call the Cuninggim Center at 322-4843.

6 (Wednesday)

**Dissertation Writers Group** meets for a preliminary planning/organizational session at 4:00 p.m. at the Cuninggim Center. Women at the proposal stage and beyond in any school or discipline are invited to attend. The group is task-oriented, providing problem solving, trouble shooting, and moral support needed to complete a dissertation. The group will meet on the third Monday from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. during the spring semester. Nancy Ransom and Katharyn May act as advisors to the group.

If you cannot attend the organizational meeting but wish to be included in the spring group, please phone the Cuninggim Center at 322-4843.

**Self-Image Discussion Group**, 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Cuninggim Center. Meets again on January 20.

11 (Monday)

**Book Group** meets to choose books the group will read for the next several months. New members welcome. 5:15 p.m. to 6:15 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

13 (Wednesday)

**Writers' Workshop** meets from 5:15 p.m. to 7:15 p.m., St. Augustine's Chapel. New members welcome. Meets again on January 27.

**Women's Studies Discussion Group**, "Female and Male Perspectives on Rape." Facilitated by Barbara Kilbourne, Walter Gove, and Cindy Pitman, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

14 (Thursday)

**Noontime Seminar. Using Student Writing to Bring Women's Voices into the Forefront of Class Discussion** led by Jasper Neel, Associate Professor of English, 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

20 (Wednesday)

**Lunchtime Book Review.** Elisabeth Perry, Associate Professor of History reviews *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap* by Stephanie Coontz. 12:15 p.m. to 1:15 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

21 (Thursday)

**MLK Series** keynote address, Marion Wright Edelman, Director of the Children's Defense Fund, 7:00 p.m., Langford Auditorium. Cuninggim Center is a co-sponsor.

26 (Tuesday)

**Challenging Some Myths About Childbirth** led by Penelope F. Wright, director, Center for Parent Education and Breast Feeding Support. Program addresses sources of fear associated with childbirth and with birth as depicted in popular culture. Videotaped vignettes of actual births are shown. Reservations are required and are limited to first twenty persons. 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

27 (Wednesday)

**Does Breastfeeding Matter?** led by Penelope F. Wright, director, Center for Parent Education and Breast Feeding Support. Program was developed from requests of attendees at Myths About Childbirth program listed above. Reservations are required and are limited to first twenty persons. 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m., Cuninggim Center.

28 (Thursday)

**Cuninggim Center Advisory Board** first spring semester meeting, Katharyn May, chair, 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Carmichael Towers East, room 208.

**Lecture by Laura C. Martin**, author of *A Life Without Fear*. Martin's book contains essential information and advice about rape. A karate expert and self-defense teacher in Atlanta, Martin will speak on rape prevention and survival skills. 7:30 p.m., David K. Wilson Hall, room 103. Book signing and reception to follow.



# A Life Without Fear reveals how to avoid sexual assault

Laura Martin investigates what makes women targets

Barbara Clarke  
Women's Center Librarian

*A Life Without Fear* is written by Laura C. Martin, a journalist, author, and self-defense teacher from Georgia. This book of practical advice is designed to educate readers about rape, and to help prevent it.

Martin discusses why men rape, and which characteristics in women increase their chances of becoming victims of stranger or date rape. She also discusses the importance of self-esteem and assertiveness in women and girls, and explains why it seems so difficult for many women to be rude, even when faced with the likelihood of sexual assault. The writer states that "trying to remain polite has resulted in more women being raped than perhaps any other single reason."

A number of "red flag traits" in men are described; these traits should warn women that such males desire to dominate and control, and are more likely than other men to commit acquaintance rape. There is also useful information on how best to help rape victims, as well as practical advice on rape prevention and education for parents and for communities.

Several chapters are devoted to fighting back; the writer advises women how they may fend off or turn off an attacker, how females can increase their physical strength, and what a rapist fears most. Martin is a karate expert, and teaches classes on self-defense for

women.

Most chapters are summarized clearly in a section entitled "In a Nutshell," and in most cases this section is followed by a list of exercises that many readers may find useful.

There are many other books on rape in the library; we also have videotapes and much other information on this topic.

(Laura Martin will lecture on January 28 at 7:30 p.m. See calendar page 3).

*Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* by Patricia Hill Collins is an excellent work on a topic on which few books have been written. The author, an associate professor of Afro-American studies at the University of Cincinnati, writes that "Black feminist thought encompasses theoretical interpretations of Black women's reality by those who live it."

This work is based on a study of black women's thoughts and activities over the past couple of hundred years. Collins places the ideas and experiences of black women at the center of her analysis. She decided not to describe feminist theory as formulated by middle-class white women, and then to discuss how this theory pertains to black women. She also tries to avoid discussing what African-American women feel about white feminist theory. Collins succeeds in her attempt to make the volume both scholarly and readable.

In her discussion of black feminist

• One out of eight women in America has been raped  
• One out of four college women will be sexually assaulted

YET EVERY WOMAN DESERVES

# A LIFE WITHOUT FEAR

A Guide to Preventing Sexual Assault

Don't leave it up to chance.

- Say "No" and have people believe you
- Take control of your own life
- Realize your own strength
- Outmaneuver rather than outmuscle an attacker
- Realize it's better to be safe than to be polite
- Trust your instincts to avoid danger

LAURA C. MARTIN

theory, the writer includes the thoughts of some little-known women, as well as those of scholars or writers such as Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Toni Morrison, and Alice Walker.

Most aspects of women's lives are covered, including work, social class, motherhood, beauty, music, self-esteem, activism, religion, literature, sexuality, lesbianism, rape, pornography, and domestic violence.

Other recent acquisitions include: *Reflecting Men at Twice Their Natural Size* by Sally Cline and Dale Spender; *Abortion: a Positive Decision* by Patricia Lunneborg; and *Champion of the Great American Family* by Pat Schroeder. ■

During the spring semester the Cunningham Center Library remains open until 8:00 p.m. on Tuesdays. On other weekdays, the library is open as usual from 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.

## Letter to the Editor

To the Editor:

I have issue with the newsletter in general, but most specifically the strong pro-abortion message conveyed by the selection of "quotes" reprinted within your newsletter and the general "pro-woman must mean pro-choice" inference within your articles.

For instance, in your September issue, a news quote was selected slam-

ming the U.S. Supreme Court's amendments restricting access to abortion. I applaud these amendments. And I am not alone. I firmly and whole-heartedly believe in the fundamental right to life of any unborn child. I do believe in choice, but not when it comes to life vs. lifestyle.

Well, the purpose of this letter is not to defend the pro-life stance; it needs no

defense. Rather, my purpose is to say that many of the views of your publication are just that, *your center's* views, and are definitely not representative of all VU women.

Jamie Pope-Cordle  
Assistant director,  
Vanderbilt Employee Health



Networking can be  
the key to success  
when job-hunting

Linda Bird  
Director, Career Center

## Confused by your own body?

Beth Grantham  
Freelance writer

First we read in a women's magazine that eating yogurt will help us avoid yeast infections. A short time later, a nutrition newsletter says that is not necessarily true because the study was not scientifically designed.

A book about self-help for women with cystitis advises avoiding fruit juice during an attack. But medical personnel often say to drink lots of cranberry juice. Then there's the matter of the proper diet. Years ago there were seven food groups. Then the experts changed this to four basic food groups. This year, they gave us the food pyramid, which suggests that grains should make up the largest portion of our diet and desserts the smallest portion.

The most recent change came in a newspaper article quoting none other than the famous Dr. Benjamin Spock. The news this time was that milk is not that great for young children to drink.

Who are we to believe?

I asked Beth Colvin Huff this question. Beth is a registered nurse and has both a bachelor and a master of science in nursing from VU. For nearly twelve years she worked as a Gynecologic Oncology Clinical Nurse Specialist, and she has taught in the School of Nursing and the Medical School at Vanderbilt. Regular readers of *Women's VU* will recognize Beth as the author of the regular column about women's health.

Beth offers the following advice to those of us who are confused about who to believe:

1. Read everything you can to learn about your body. Women need to know about their bodies. Books, like *The New Our Bodies, Ourselves* are a good place to start, she said. "Women are not terribly knowledgeable. They need to learn about their own anatomy, how it functions, and how organs relate to each other."

2. Read newspaper and health reports critically.

"Be very careful about taking the little pieces of information that appear in the media and saying 'I'm going to change my behavior,'" she warned. "We must remember that news articles may not be health information that you can apply to your own situation."

"We have to have well-designed studies before you can truly draw conclusions from them, and this specific information is rarely included for the magazine or newspaper reader. The specific information is in the medical journals, so it is hard to know how the studies relate to your situation if you just read an article in the newspaper."

3. Talk to your health care providers and to other women.

"Physicians are more involved in health education because more women are demanding it," she said. "Women are reading more and are not so willing to take the word of one person."

Because so much knowledge is available, it is helpful to have one person who can synthesize that information. Ideally, this person would be your health care provider.

"Be careful about second-hand information. Compare what you learn from conversations with the reading that you do and then clear all of it with your health care provider," she said.

4. All of the new medical procedures reported in the news media are not available or even appropriate to everyone who has the same condition.

"For example, a new form of laser surgery for gall bladder problems has been reported, but the criteria for having this type of surgery is rather strict," she explained.

"When something is new, the press will pick up on it and report it, but it may not be relevant to the average health consumer or available for years to come."

Beth continues to do her part to make health information more understandable and more available to women because women's health is the area of medicine that she loves. ■

It still fascinates me to learn how people's careers evolve and how they find employment. When meeting someone new who has an interesting career or position, I'll usually ask, "Do you mind telling me how you got started in your career?" People are usually more than willing to tell their stories and the stories will vary as greatly as the people and positions. However, there is one consistent theme: the significant role of the personal contact. In virtually every story I hear, some kind of personal connection was involved in the process, like, "a friend of mine told me about the position," or "my advisor gave me the name of the person to contact."

The label applied to this aspect of the career search is "networking."

Networking is not just a neat idea; it is a necessary component of any successful employment search and by extension, any successful career. The kind of first-hand information which is so important to the job-hunter is rarely in print and must be obtained through people.

While networking is important at any stage of a woman's career, it is extremely important for the entry-level person or the career-changer. For those in the process of making career decisions, the "information interview" is vital to effective decision making. This type of "interview" is simply a way to get first-hand information not in print about a type of career or work, or about a particular employer.

Often young women are intimidated by the concept of networking, assuming it implies the necessity of having "connections" with important or influential people. It is important to know that *any* working person can potentially be an invaluable source of information. Networking does not really imply using contacts only with CEOs, congressional representatives, or other VIPs. And it certainly does not translate into the use of influence; rather it is simply a way to convey information.

Job-seekers often assume that writ-  
— see *Networking*, page 6



Additional information on items listed below is available at the Cuninggim Center.

## CONFERENCES

Association for Women in Psychology, "Re-membering our Wholeness", March 11-14, Atlanta, Georgia.

The New Jersey Project, "The Inclusive Curriculum: Setting our own Agenda," April 16-18, Parsippany, New Jersey.

Southeastern Women's Studies Association, "The Intersection of Differences: Women Creating the New Social Order," April 16-18, Vanderbilt University. Call Sherre Harrington (formerly Dryden) at 343-6043 for more information.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

The Association for Women in Development announces the Sixth International Forum, ". . . Joining Forces To Further Shared Visions," October 20-24, Washington, D.C. Deadline for submitting proposals for participation is April 15.



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## VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

Women Helping Women Through Decisions. Women volunteers (faculty, staff, and students) are needed for a course in positive decision-making and life-planning skills at the Tennessee Women's Prison. Would you work one-on-one with a prisoner/partner for an hour weekly during the 8-week course, February 1 - March 29? Volunteer training is scheduled for January 23-24. For information, call Kathy Masulia at 383-5853.

## CALL FOR NOMINATIONS: CENTER ADVISORY BOARD

The Margaret Cuninggim Women's Center Advisory Board is seeking interested persons to serve as at-large members beginning in the fall of 1993 for a two-year term. Undergraduate and graduate or professional students, faculty members, staff, and administrators serve on the board. Interested women and men should apply. Self-nominations are encouraged.

Send personal applications and/or nominations to Peggy Rados, Nominating Committee, A-1104 MCN (2637), or for further information call the Cuninggim Center at 322-4843.

ten communications form the core of a job search. While expert resumés and perfect cover letters should accompany formal applications, the most important information associated with a job-search will be conveyed verbally. Networking accesses verbally-conveyed information in advance of actually applying for a particular position.

Career women in the 90s must learn how to "network" to their best advantage if they hope to achieve their career goals. The traditional "old boys' network" is legendary. While it does have a negative connotation, we know how powerful it has been in the past in supporting the career aims of some men.

Today, women have the opportunity to participate in legitimate organizations such as CABLE, a Nashville network for business and professional women. It is important that career women take advantage of these networking opportunities to give themselves the same kind of advantage their male counterparts have had in the past. Many professionals and, in addition, many business organizations now have women's groups (such as Women in Banking, Women in Accounting), and community activities provide places to meet people with similar and complementary career interests.

Take it from me. Asking people at social gatherings about their work is not only an intriguing pastime for dedicated career advisors, it is a smart career woman's key to success. ■

*Vanderbilt University is an equal opportunity, affirmative action university.*

### Women's VU

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