

# MEDIA KIT



**THE RAISING  
OF AMERICA**  
EARLY CHILDHOOD AND THE FUTURE OF OUR NATION

[www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org)

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## What Is *The Raising of America*?

*The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation* is a new, five-part documentary series probing how conditions faced by young children and their families can literally alter the developing brain and affect a child's later success—in school and in life.

Neuroscience and other studies indicate that providing our youngest children safe, secure and nurturing environments pays many dividends, both for individuals and for the future health, prosperity and equity of the nation. Many experts even argue that investing in young children and their families may be the smartest investment any nation can make.

*The Raising of America* is the first documentary series to translate these scientific findings into compelling stories that challenge how parents, providers, policymakers and the public think about society's interest and responsibilities in these first crucial years.

The series, supported by an ambitious companion website at [www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org), is being used by more than 600 partner organizations to reframe the way Americans look at early childhood health and development and spark a much-needed national conversation: Will the U.S. better assure the conditions that all children need for a strong start and put the nation on a path towards a healthier, safer, better educated, more prosperous and more equitable tomorrow? Or will it squander its own future?

The series zeroes in on several themes about why some children thrive while others flounder:

### ***Brains are built, not born.***

Brains are built over time. The developing brain forms more than 700 new neural connections (or synapses) every second during the first years of life! This brain architecture provides the foundation for future learning, behaviors and mental and physical health—for better and for worse.

- How our brain cells get wired together depends upon early relationships and environments.
- Safe, stable and nurturing relationships and environments help form sturdy brain architecture and a strong start in life. On the other hand, frequent or prolonged exposures to early adversity—poverty, neglect, chaos, violence—can result in toxic stress.
- Toxic stress alters brain architecture and increases the risk of behavioral, emotional and learning problems later in life, including chronic disease in middle age.

- While new neural connections can form throughout life, it's easier and less costly to form strong brain architecture during the early years than to intervene later.

### ***Blaming parents is the easy way out.***

Families don't live inside a bubble. Parents are increasingly pressed by circumstances beyond their control, which in turn can hamper their efforts to provide the safe, stable and nurturing environments all young children need.

- Middle-income parents feel they're drowning in a sea of long work hours and commutes, stagnant wages, rising housing costs and a lack of paid parental leave.
- Low-income parents face even more stressors: low wages, insecure jobs and unreliable hours, chaotic neighborhoods, no paid sick leave and the anxiety of juggling bills.
- Workers in low-wage jobs are disproportionately Black, Latino and female.
- Stressors on parents can be "contagious": they can get under the skin of babies and young children, altering the wiring of their developing brains—with enduring consequences.

### ***The best parenting programs may have little to do with parenting at all.***

A disproportionate focus on parents' choices ignores the forces that can help or hinder their efforts to be the parents they want to be. Improving conditions for parents can improve young children's chances of growing into healthy, compassionate and responsible adults.

- It's harder for parents to be responsive to the often-subtle needs of babies when denied paid parental leave, sick leave or even a single paid vacation day or holiday.
- Young children benefit from an infrastructure that promotes care: living wages and reliable hours, quality, affordable housing, paid parental and family leave, social inclusion and desegregation, flex time, better transit, and affordable, high-quality childcare.
- Even the best teaching about breastfeeding won't help if we don't also ensure that working mothers are given time, privacy and access to a refrigerator at work so they can pump.

### ***Young children are America's smartest investment***

Today's children are tomorrow's parents, neighbors, workers, citizens and leaders.

- Studies suggest that creating the conditions all children need for a strong start offers the best chance for improving adult outcomes.
- Everyone gains from a healthier, safer, better educated, more equitable and prosperous American future.

***Change is possible.***

The U.S. has a long history of social movements improving conditions for families with young children—from ending child labor and creating the eight-hour work day to the civil rights and women’s movements. We’ve done it before; we can do it again.

- The conditions and policies that impede our ability to provide for our children aren’t etched in stone. They are the result of decisions we as a body politic have made—decisions we have the power to change.

## Episode Summaries

### Episode 1 | “*The Raising of America Signature Hour*” (58 minutes)

*A beautiful mind is a terrible thing to waste, but by neglecting the basic needs of our smallest and most vulnerable citizens, America does it every day. This powerful documentary should focus our energies on building the vital resources needed for early childhood health and development.*

**Barbara Ehrenreich**  
Author, *Nickel and Dimed*

The U.S. is a can-do nation. So why is child wellbeing in the U.S. so much worse than in other rich countries? How does what [Paul Kershaw](#) calls “the growing squeeze” on so many young families and caregivers—the squeeze for time, for money and for resources—“drip down” on their infants and young children, literally altering the wiring of their developing brains with potential long-term consequences for learning, earning and mental and physical health? How might we do better?

Interweaving stories of parents with discoveries from neuroscience, “*The Raising of America Signature Hour*” shows that many families struggle to provide the nurturing environments all babies and young children need to thrive—while too often hindered by social conditions that threaten to put their children on low developmental paths.

Parents feel increasingly stressed in a fend-for-yourself society, working long hours for low or stagnant wages and lacking access to high-quality childcare, paid parental leave, living-wage jobs and, perhaps most vital, time and peace of mind. The 20-year Wisconsin Study of Work and Family found that these chronic stressors on parents can get under the skin of their babies and young children with enduring consequences, increasing their risk of emotional, behavioral and learning problems as they grow up. “We’re talking about processes here that are at a biological level,” says Study co-director Marilyn Essex.

The “Signature Hour” also features Dr. Renee Boynton-Jarrett, a trusted pediatrician and researcher at Boston Medical Center, Nobel-winning economist James Heckman, former multibillion-dollar hedge fund manager Robert Dugger, and the director for the Harvard Center on the Developing Child, Dr. Jack Shonkoff. Each brings a very different perspective to the importance of early childhood experiences, yet their conclusions are the same: for children to do better in school and in life, we can’t wait until they enter kindergarten.

As preschool teacher Aiyauna Terry puts it, “This is the future right here. Invest in them. Invest in their parents. If you want America to get back on top, invest in these children now. They’re not going to fail you—but we can’t fail them.” The fate of the nation may hang in the balance.

## **Meet the Contributors: “The Raising of America Signature Hour”**

The “Signature Hour” features a roster of experts and advocates whose insights shed light on the many factors influencing child development in the United States.

**Ellen Bravo** is executive director of Family Values @ Work, a national network of coalitions advocating for family-friendly workplace policies.

**Cory Burghy** is a researcher studying the impact of parental stress on children at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

**Renée Boynton-Jarrett, MD, ScD**, is a Boston Medical Center pediatrician and researcher. She is founding director of Vital Village, a network of residents and agencies committed to maximizing child, family, and community wellbeing.

**Robert Dugger** is an economist and co-founder of ReadyNation, a business-oriented child advocacy group. He is a former partner of Tudor Investment Corporation, a multibillion-dollar hedge fund, and the former policy director of the American Bankers Association.

**Marilyn Essex** is a professor of psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Medicine and Public Health. She is the director of the Life Stress and Human Development Lab, and co-director and principal investigator of the Wisconsin Study of Families and Work.

**James Heckman** is the Henry Schultz Distinguished Service Professor of Economics at the University of Chicago, a Nobel Prize winner in economics, and an expert in the economics of human development.

**Judith Lichtman** is an attorney and family-leave advocate, and past president of the National Partnership for Women & Families.

**john a. powell** is director at the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society, University of California–Berkeley, and professor of law, UC–Berkeley School of Law.

**Arthur Rolnick**, former senior vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, is now a senior fellow and co-director of the Human Capital Research Collaborative at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota.

**Jack Shonkoff, MD**, is director of the Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University, and co-editor of *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Child Development*.

**Aiyauna Terry** is an early childhood teacher at Ellis Memorial Child Development Center in Boston.

**Edward Tronick** is professor of psychology and director of the Child Development Unit at the University of Massachusetts–Boston. He conducted the classic “Still Face Experiment” with Dr. T. Berry Brazelton and colleagues.

## Episode 2 | “Once Upon a Time: When Childcare for All Wasn’t Just a Fairy Tale” (32 minutes)

*It’s hard to believe there was once a national, bipartisan consensus about what America owes its children. This gripping film shows how our commitment to children and working families was derailed by a concerted fear-mongering campaign. But it also reveals what can be done if we set our minds to it. It should be seen by parents, teachers, policymakers, and especially by the children and teenagers who will shape our future.*

**Stephanie Coontz, Author**

***The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap***

Childcare in America is a patchwork—uneven in quality, unaffordable to most and failing many of our youngest children. Imagine how American life might be different today if all of the nation’s children had access to high-quality early care and education for the past four decades. **“Once Upon a Time”** tells the story of how we almost did.

During World War II, the U.S government opened childcare centers across the nation for mothers laboring in our defense plants...but after the war ended, they were shut down. Twenty-five years later, in 1971, a bipartisan Congress—still influenced by the Civil Rights movement and the War on Poverty, and concerned about the growing number of working mothers—passed a bill providing high-quality childcare, home visiting and other services to every family that wanted it. But for the Comprehensive Child Development Act (CCDA) to become law, it needed President Richard Nixon’s signature.

Patrick Buchanan, a young White House speechwriter at the time, reveals how a group of powerful conservatives—“the elite of the Conservative movement,” as he calls them in “Once Upon a Time”—recast the bill as government intrusion in the family.

At the 11<sup>th</sup> hour, Nixon vetoed the bill. On camera, Buchanan reads the veto message he penned for Nixon, which branded the CCDA as “a communal approach” to childrearing. The veto marked the first time “family values” were invoked to undermine families. It represented a radical shift away from using government as a tool to enable more Americans to share in the prosperity of our economy—and toward the “fend-for-yourself” America of today.

Even so, there is a highly successful, federally funded childcare program provided by the country’s largest employer. In 1989, 18 years after Nixon’s veto, Congress mandated that the U.S. armed forces offer high-quality care to all families and employees of the military. At Camp Pendleton Marine Base, we witness some of the best childcare in the country—all of it affordable, child-centered and strictly regulated.

We once came aching close to winning childcare for all. What will it take to enact effective child and family policies today?

## **Meet the Contributors: “Once Upon a Time”**

“Once Upon a Time” features interviews with policymakers, experts and advocates who shed light on the many factors influencing child development in the United States.

**Patrick Buchanan** was a White House adviser and speechwriter during the Richard Nixon administration from 1969 to 1974.

**Brigadier General (now Major General) Vincent Coglianese** is Assistant Deputy Commandant, Installations and Logistics, United States Marine Corps. He was the commanding general of Marine Corps Installations–West and Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton during the filming of “Once Upon a Time”.

**Marian Wright Edelman** is founder and president of the Children’s Defense Fund. As a young lawyer, she helped write the Comprehensive Child Development Act.

**Sid Johnson** was legislative aide to Sen. Walter Mondale from 1969 to 1976.

**Maria Langley** is director of the Browne Child Development Center at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton.

**Laura Lovett** is an associate professor in the Department of History at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst. A noted historian, she was also the founding editor of the *Journal of the History of Children and Youth*.

**Walter Mondale** is a former U.S. senator (D-Minn.) and served as Vice President of the United States under President Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1981. He was the Senate sponsor of the Comprehensive Child Development Act.

**Clare Sanford** is the enrollment and nutrition manager for the YWCA of Minneapolis Children’s Centers.

**Phyllis Schlafly** is the founder and president of the Eagle Forum, a conservative interest group.

**Robert Self** is a professor of history at Brown University and author of *All in the Family*.

**Edward Zigler, MD**, was director of the Office of Child Development and was chief of the U.S. Children’s Bureau from 1970 to 1972 under President Nixon. He is currently a board member emeritus of Zero to Three, a national nonprofit that provides parents, professionals and policymakers the knowledge and know-how to nurture early child development.

## Episode 3 | “Are We Crazy About Our Kids?” (32 minutes)

*Ensuring all children get a good start in life results in a more talented workforce, stronger economy, healthier society and responsible citizenry. This film must be viewed and used as a springboard for action to help all children realize their full potential!*

**Matthew E. Melmed, Executive Director**  
**Zero to Three**

Science shows that a child’s experiences during the early years are vital to building the foundation for future success in school and in life. Now economists are studying the costs and benefits of high-quality early care and preschool. And they’re worried—not because we’re spending too much but because we’re investing too little where it matters most.

“**Are We Crazy About Our Kids?**” dives into studies by Nobel laureate James Heckman, former Federal Reserve economist Arthur Rolnick and others demonstrating how high-quality early care and preschool yield huge personal and social benefits—and pay for themselves many times over.

From the Perry Preschool studies to the Abecedarian project and the Chicago Child-Parent Centers, from Quebec’s universal seven-dollar-a-day childcare program to Salt Lake City’s groundbreaking preschool initiative, the studies show that when we invest in our children’s earliest years they do better in school, earn more in their jobs, pay more taxes and cost society less in social services and prison. Every dollar invested returns between \$6 and \$18 per child, depending on the study.

Yet childcare in the United States remains largely haphazard, unregulated and unaffordable for most. In California, cemeteries are inspected more often than childcare centers, while the cost of center-based childcare often runs more than \$10,000 a year.

Meanwhile, cities and states spent \$80 billion in 2012 in tax breaks and other corporate subsidies in a competition to lure each other’s businesses. Arthur Rolnick points out that no net new jobs were created. “You want to make sure you have sustainable growth?” he asks. “Invest in your children.”

High-quality childcare and preschool is just one piece of the solution. But economists are clear about the equation: our system is paying for failure rather than investing for success.

The question is, what will we do about it? How crazy are we about our kids?

## **Meet the Contributors: “Are We Crazy About Our Kids?”**

“Are We Crazy About Our Kids?” features interviews with policymakers, economists and advocates who explore the economic benefits reaped by investing in affordable, high-quality early care and preschool.

**Camil Bouchard** is a community psychologist in Québec, Canada. He led the task force recommending that Québec introduce universal child care.

**Lyse Brunet** is the former executive director of Avenir d’enfants, an early childhood development organization based in Montréal, Québec, Canada, who helped campaign for the adoption of universal child care.

**Alexi Chartrand** is a freelance media producer and father of Vladimir, a student at Montréal’s Graffiti child development center.

**Janis Dubno** is a senior policy analyst with Voices for Utah Children.

**Robert Dugger** is an economist, former investment banker, and co-founder of ReadyNation.

**James Heckman** is a Nobel Prize-winning economist and professor of economics at the University of Chicago.

**Yolande James** served as Québec’s Minister of Families from 2010 to 2012.

**Christa Japel** is a professor of specialized education and training at the Université du Québec à Montréal.

**Aaron Osmond** is a Utah State Senator representing District 10.

**Cheryl Polk** is president of the HighScope Educational Research Foundation.

**Arthur Rolnick** is a former senior vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis. He is now senior fellow and co-director of the Human Capital Research Collaborative at the Humphrey School of Public Affairs, University of Minnesota.

**Brenda Van Gorder** is director of Preschool Services for the Granite City, Utah, school district (Salt Lake City).

## Episode 4 | “Wounded Places: Confronting Childhood PTSD in America’s Shell-Shocked Cities” (42 minutes)

*Thank you, “Wounded Places,” for uncovering the backstory of the violence and trauma in our cities and the cumulative impact it has on our youth, their families and communities. Now that we’ve seen it, we must mobilize and engage policymakers, community members, funders, and others to take immediate action. Our children deserve nothing less from us!*

**Angela Glover Blackwell, Founder & CEO**  
**PolicyLink**

Caheri Gut  irrez, Antonio Carter and Javier Arango are among the remarkable young people featured in “Wounded Places” who are wrestling with hyper-vigilance, sudden rages, nightmares, inability to trust and difficulty concentrating in school.

Their symptoms look a lot like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)—but they are not combat vets, and for them there is no “post.”

They live in Oakland or Philadelphia, two cities whose long history of disinvestment and structural racism has ravaged entire neighborhoods and exposed children and families to multiple adversities and traumatic experiences—not just violence, but fear, poverty, domestic instability and a sense of futurelessness.

Stanford physician and researcher Victor Carrion explains, “If we are crossing the street and we see that a truck is coming at us, we can manage that situation, get scared, jump and move quickly. Unfortunately, many children in our society feel like a truck is coming at them all day long, for more days than not, and this really takes a toll.”

Many of these children are almost automatically characterized as defiant or “acting out.” Five-year-olds are suspended from school. Teachers, police, the media, and even social workers too often peg them as “bad” kids, not injured kids in need of healing.

But in Oakland, youth leaders like Caheri and Javier are now counseling other young people how to ‘own’ their trauma. We also meet a remarkable group of peer counselors, doctors and community organizers blazing a new model of trauma-informed care, such as John Rich, MD, MacArthur Fellow and director of Drexel University’s Center for Nonviolence and Social Justice. Rather than ask, “What’s wrong with you?” they ask, “What happened to you?” and “How can we help you heal?” This simple shift can be transformative—for those suffering from trauma, for the neighborhoods they live in, and even for the providers themselves.

## **Meet the Contributors: “Wounded Places”**

In “Wounded Places,” community advocates, parents and public health experts spotlight how children raised in isolated and neglected communities can be exposed to multiple traumatic stressors.

**Aswad Aarif** is the restorative practices coordinator for Catholic Charities of the East Bay in California.

**Javier Arango** is a youth engagement specialist with Catholic Charities of the East Bay.

**Sandra Bloom, MD**, is an associate professor at Drexel University School of Public Health who created the Sanctuary Model™ approach to trauma.

**Millie Burns** is deputy chief of programs for Catholic Charities of the East Bay.

**Victor C. Carrion, MD**, is a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Stanford University School of Medicine and director of the Stanford Early Life Stress Research Program at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital.

**Ted Corbin, MD, MPP**, is an assistant professor at Drexel University College of Medicine & School of Public Health and medical director for the Healing Hurt People Program.

**Aisha Coulson Walters** was formerly a social worker at 11th Street Family Health Services of Drexel University.

**Caheri Gutiérrez** is a violence prevention educator and case manager for Youth Alive! based in Oakland, Calif.

**Christine Henry** is a mother of two preschool-age sons and a newborn with her partner, Tracy, living in Philadelphia, Penn.

**Maria D. McColgan, MD**, is medical director of the Child Protection Program at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children.

**Ricardo Peña** is a clinical case manager with Catholic Charities of the East Bay.

**Harold Reed** is director of the Boys & Girls Club of Wilson Park, Philadelphia.

**John Rich, MD, MPH**, is a professor at Drexel University School of Public Health and director of the Center for Non-Violence and Social Justice. He is a MacArthur Fellow.

**Olis Simmons** is president & CEO of Youth UpRising in Oakland, Calif.

**Dan Taylor, MD**, is director for community and child advocacy at St. Christopher’s Hospital for Children in Philadelphia.

**Roy Wade Jr., MD, PhD, MPH**, is on the staff of the Department of General Pediatrics at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia.

## Episode 5 | “DNA Is Not Destiny: How the Outside Gets Under the Skin” (35 minutes)

*The Raising of America is an extraordinarily important and moving film which illuminates what I witness every day as a pediatrician: how our policies are reflected in our children’s bodies and brains. Anyone caring about our country’s future needs to see this film, discuss it, and ask our politicians how they propose to improve conditions for all our youngest children and their families.*

**Barry Zuckerman, MD, Founder**  
**Reach Out and Read**

Discoveries in the exciting new field of epigenetics suggest that fetal and early child environments literally become part of us. Experiences, scientists have learned, can leave chemical marks—called the “epigenome”—on our DNA, especially during the early years. The epigenome acts like a dimmer switch or volume control, turning genes on or off, making them shout or whisper. In so doing, they change the way our brains and bodies function—with enduring consequences for behaviors and mental and physical health.

The genes we’re born with don’t change, but the settings of the epigenome—and hence gene expression—can, especially during critical periods like gestation, the early years and the onset of puberty.

“DNA Is Not Destiny” walks us through some of the pioneering animal and human studies that link the diets of pregnant mothers, toxic exposures, trauma, parental neglect, poverty and even the everyday stressors faced by middle- and low-income parents to epigenetic changes in babies. These changes in the epigenome have in turn been associated with a host of effects as children grow up: anxiety, depression, poor learning, obesity and even cancers. They can change the course of a child’s life.

“DNA Is Not Destiny” considers the profound social and political implications of these discoveries. If social influences can alter the way our genes work, then early environments can help or hinder children’s success and wellbeing in ways that go beyond the individual choices we make.

We can’t change our genes. But we *can* change the environments that modify our epigenomes. The science, says Marie Lynn Miranda, environmental researcher and provost of Rice University, is clear: improved social conditions can provide the biological foundation for healthier, more resilient and successful lives.

## **Meet the Contributors: “DNA Is Not Destiny”**

**Dana Dolinoy** is associate professor, Environmental Health Sciences, University of Michigan School of Public Health.

**Marilyn Essex** is a professor of psychiatry at the University of Wisconsin–Madison School of Medicine and Public Health. She is the director of the Life Stress and Human Development Lab, and co-director and principal investigator of the Wisconsin Study of Families and Work.

**Darlene Francis** is a behavioral neuroscientist at the University of California–Berkeley.

**Michael Meaney** is James McGill Professor of Psychiatry, Neurology and Neurosurgery and director of the Program for the Study of Genes, Behavior and the Environment at McGill University, Montréal, Québec, Canada.

**Michael Kobor** is Canada Research Chair in Social Epigenetics at the University of British Columbia.

**Marie Lynn Miranda** is an environmental researcher and provost of Rice University and was founding director of the Children’s Environmental Health Initiative at the University of Michigan.

# Quotable Notables on *The Raising of America*

## THE RAISING OF AMERICA: THE SIGNATURE HOUR

*The Raising of America* offers a powerful wake-up call. If we continue to fail our children and our families, we will fail as a country. The U.S. already performs worse than most peer countries on key indicators. But why? This important film reveals how we consistently underinvest in our youngest children and fail to provide the supports families need...We can—and must—all do more.

**Mary Bassett, MD, MPH | New York City Commissioner of Health**

A beautiful mind is a terrible thing to waste, but by neglecting the basic needs of our smallest and most vulnerable citizens, America does it every day. This powerful documentary should focus our energies on building the vital resources needed for early childhood health and development.

**Barbara Ehrenreich | Author, *Nickel and Dimed***

*The Raising of America* is a stirring call to action! It reminds us that our children are our highest responsibility and greatest strategic treasure. *The Raising of America* underscores the clear and compelling science: supporting families and enriching the early experiences of our children makes us a better and stronger nation.

**Harvey Karp, MD, FAAP | Author, *The Happiest Toddler on the Block***

Provides gripping evidence of the importance of early life experiences for children—and that programs and public policies can create much healthier children for the future.”

**James M. Perrin, MD, FAAP | Immediate Past President, American Academy of Pediatrics; Professor of Pediatrics, Harvard Medical School**

Most hard-working American families do everything they can for their children’s sake. Yet more and more are finding that no matter how hard they try, they just can’t provide for their children’s basic needs, putting our nation’s future in jeopardy. *The Raising America* shines a bright light on these families’ everyday heroism, the hope and potential that live inside every child, and the practical steps we all can take to get our country back on the road to progress before it’s too late.

**Joshua Sparrow, MD | Director, Brazelton Touchpoints Center, Boston Children’s Hospital**

*The Raising of America* makes a compelling case for the roadmap that will make the United States a much healthier nation. Should we follow this pathway, we are sure to improve our health and wellbeing in a holistic and thoughtful way, and be amongst the healthiest nations in a generation.

**Georges C. Benjamin, MD | Executive Director, American Public Health Association**

## **ONCE UPON A TIME: When Childcare for All Wasn't Just a Fairytale**

In this brilliant, powerful, and moving film we learn the wrenching story of the political forces which hijacked childcare for all in 1971, and still keep us down today. Why did a bill supported by virtually every civic group concerned with children and passed by both houses of Congress, a bill that would have done so much for child well-being, fail so miserably to secure Pres. Nixon's signature to become law? On a No. 1 issue, this is the No. 1 film!

**Arlie Hochschild** | Author, *The Outsourced Self* and *So How's the Family?*

Serves as a powerful call to action, challenging us to renew our commitment to our children and secure a brighter future for our country. The investments we make in our children today have a direct impact on how strong, prosperous, and dynamic America will be tomorrow.

**Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.)** | Minority Leader, U.S. House of Representatives

It's hard to believe there was once a national, bipartisan consensus about what America owes its children. This gripping film shows how our commitment to children and working families was derailed by a concerted fear-mongering campaign. But it also reveals what can be done if we set our minds to it. It should be seen by parents, teachers, policymakers, and especially by the children and teenagers who will shape our future.

**Stephanie Coontz** | Author, *The Way We Never Were: American Families and the Nostalgia Trap*

The extraordinary but widely forgotten story of a time when childcare for all wasn't just a fairytale has been brilliantly told in this film. In the decades since, the evidence documenting high-quality child care as a critical ingredient in determining whether young children, their families and, indeed, the nation are to flourish has grown ever stronger. "Once Upon a Time" will inspire us to act so that childcare and preschool for all, finally back on the national agenda, will at long-last become a reality.

**Lisbeth B. Schorr** | Author, *Within Our Reach*

In this thought provoking film, we learn how an initiative which would have opened a path towards a better future for our children while it supported working families was vetoed, marking a turning point in our nation's history and leading to the false dichotomy between care and education which still haunts us today. "Once Upon a Time" is a powerful, must-see film which will inspire anyone seeing it to redouble their efforts in behalf of quality early care and other initiatives which ensure all families the support their children need to succeed.

**Joan Lombardi** | Director, Early Opportunities LLC; former Deputy Assistant Secretary for Early Childhood Development, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

## **ARE WE CRAZY ABOUT OUR KIDS?**

Makes a compelling case for the importance of smart investments in young children, which yield a lifetime of benefits for families, communities, and our country...Demonstrates why we must commit to making this care more available, affordable and of better quality.

**Lynette M. Fraga, PhD** | Executive Director, **Child Care Aware® of America**

Makes the vivid and compelling case that investing in policies and programs which support babies, young children and their families benefits us all. Ensuring all children get a good start in life results in a more talented workforce, stronger economy, healthier society and responsible citizenry. This film must be viewed and used as a springboard for action to help all children realize their full potential!

**Matthew E. Melmed** | Executive Director, **Zero To Three**

A splendid blend of first-rate case studies embedded with vital voices in education, economics, and government. It adds up to a powerful case for investment in the so-important early learning years.

**David Lawrence Jr.** | Retired publisher, *The Miami Herald*; President, **The Early Childhood Initiative Foundation**; Education and Community Leadership Scholar at the University of Miami School of Education & Human Development

This film powerfully illustrates why business leaders—who might seem unlikely to care about early childhood programs—are committed advocates for investments in early learning. Hundreds of CEOs of major companies, chamber of commerce executives, and small business owners across the country believe that giving children a good beginning is vital to helping kids—and our economy—thrive.

**Sara Watson** | Director, **ReadyNation and America's Promise Alliance**

## **WOUNDED PLACES: Confronting Childhood PTSD in America's Shell-Shocked Cities**

Thank you, "Wounded Places," for uncovering the backstory of the violence and trauma in our cities and the cumulative impact it has on our youth, their families and communities. Now that we've seen it, we must mobilize and engage policymakers, community members, funders, and others to take immediate action. Our children deserve nothing less from us!

**Angela Glover Blackwell** | Founder & CEO, **PolicyLink**

Will we let "Wounded Places" start the conversations we so desperately need? All children react to the world through their experiences. They have the capacities for trust, friendship, learning and love. Or they can become suspicious, fearful and overly aggressive. "Wounded Places" shows us that children can flourish and our nation becomes healthier, safer and better educated when we care for and invest in impoverished communities rather than neglect them.

**Benjamin Jealous** | Partner, **Kapor Capital**; former President, **NAACP**

"Wounded Places" is a wakeup call. We talk a great deal about the violence in our cities, but not about the aftermath. "Wounded Places" does. Powerfully and thoughtfully. The film poses the question we must all ask: What happens to a generation of children who come to view the world as hostile and threatening?

**Alex Kotlowitz** | Author, *There Are No Children Here*

"Wounded Places" is a riveting documentary on the severe psychological trauma children suffer living in violent communities. It's an urgent plea to protect our children and help them heal from endemic victimization.

**Alvin F. Poussaint, MD** | Professor of Psychiatry, [Harvard Medical School](#)



# Do These Numbers Add Up? Early Childhood in America

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Rank of U.S. in child well-being among rich nations<sup>1</sup>: **26<sup>th</sup>**

Percentage of five-year-olds in the U.S. not ready to learn when entering kindergarten<sup>2</sup>:  
**40%**

Portion of Americans age 17-24 who were not qualified for military service in 2012 because they were overweight, too poorly educated or had a criminal record<sup>3</sup>: **3/4**

Rank of U.S. high school graduation rate among rich nations in 1970 and 2014<sup>4,5</sup>: **1<sup>st</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup>**

Percentage of new mothers in the U.S. who return to work by the time their infants are 3 months old<sup>6</sup>, some because they want to, most because they have to<sup>7</sup>: **40%**

Number of months of paid parental leave in Germany and Quebec by law<sup>8,9</sup>: **14, 9**

Number of months of paid parental leave in the U.S. under federal law<sup>10</sup>: **0**

Rank of U.S. among 45 rich nations for quality, affordability and availability of childcare<sup>11</sup>:  
**22<sup>nd</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>**

Average cost for center-based childcare per child per year<sup>12</sup>: **\$10,000**

Portion of childcare centers in the U.S. that are accredited<sup>13</sup>: **1 in 10**

Annual median wage for childcare workers in the U.S.<sup>14</sup>: **\$19,600**  
**(less than poverty level for family of three)**

Portion of children age 0-5 living in poverty<sup>15,16</sup>: **1 in 4**

Percentage of White, Black and Hispanic children in America age 0-5 in poverty<sup>15,16</sup>:  
**34%, 69%, 66%**

Number of rich nations that do NOT guarantee workers any paid vacations, paid holidays, paid sick leave, or paid maternity leave by federal law<sup>17,18</sup>: **1 (the United States)**

Rank of U.S. in GDP in the world<sup>19</sup>: **1<sup>st</sup>**

- <sup>1</sup> Peter Adamson, Innocenti Report Card 11 (Florence, Italy: The Unicef Office of Research, 2013), 2.
- <sup>2</sup> Jen Brown, The Link Between Early School Learning and Care and School Readiness (Seattle, WA: Economic Opportunity Institute, October 2002), 1, accessed January 6, 2012, <http://www.eoionline.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/early-learning/ELCLinkSchoolReadiness-Oct02.pdf>.
- <sup>3</sup> Mission: Readiness, Ready, Willing, And Unable to Serve (Washington, DC: Mission: Readiness Military Leaders for Kids, 2009), Introduction.
- <sup>4</sup> Henry M. Levin and Cecilia E. Rouse, “The True Cost of High School Dropouts,” The New York Times, January 25, 2012, accessed February 13, 2013, [www.nytimes.com/2012/01/26/opinion/the-true-cost-of-high-school-dropouts.html](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/26/opinion/the-true-cost-of-high-school-dropouts.html).
- <sup>5</sup> OECD, Education at a Glance 2014 (Paris, France: OECD, 2014), 67.
- <sup>6</sup> Wen-Jui Han et al, Monthly Labor Review: The timing of mothers’ employment after childbirth, (Washington, DC: Bureau of Labor Statistics, June 2008), 17.
- <sup>7</sup> Demos, State of Young America: Raising a Family (New York: Demos, 2011), 6.
- <sup>8</sup> Sonja Blum and Daniel Erler, Germany (Vienna, Austria: International Network on Leave Policies & Research, 2014), 2.
- <sup>9</sup> “Choice of Benefit Plan,” Québec Parental Insurance Plan, Gouvernement du Québec, accessed February 25, 2013, [http://www.rqap.gouv.qc.ca/travailleur\\_salarie/choix\\_en.asp](http://www.rqap.gouv.qc.ca/travailleur_salarie/choix_en.asp).
- <sup>10</sup> “Family and Medical Leave Act,” United States Department of Labor, accessed July 20, 2015, <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>.
- <sup>11</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit, Starting well: Benchmarking early education across the world (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2012), 22.
- <sup>12</sup> United States Office of Personnel Management, 2010 Federal Child Care Subsidy Program Call for Data Results (Washington, DC: United States Office of Personnel Management, 2012), 2.
- <sup>13</sup> Child Care Aware of America, Child care in America: 2014 State Fact Sheets (Washington, DC: Child Care Aware of America, 2014), 8.
- <sup>14</sup> “Childcare workers,” National Employment and Wages, May 2013, Bureau of Labor Statistics, accessed November 25, 2014, <http://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes399011.htm>.
- <sup>15</sup> NOTE: 25% of children 0-5 live in poverty; 22% of children 0-17 live in poverty. “Children in Poverty by Age Group,” Kids Count Data Center, accessed March 27, 2015, <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/5650-children-in-poverty-by-age-group?loc=1&loct=1#detailed/1/any/false/36,868,867,133,38/17,18,36/12263,12264>.
- <sup>16</sup> Yang Jiang, Mercedes Edono and Curtis Skinner, “Basic Facts About Low-Income Children: Children under 6 Years, 2013”; National Center for Children in Poverty: January 2015 accessed September 13, 2015. [http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text\\_1097.pdf](http://www.nccp.org/publications/pdf/text_1097.pdf)
- <sup>17</sup> Rebecca Ray, Milla Sanes, and John Schmitt, No-Vacation Nation Revisited (Washington, D.C.: Center for Economic and Policy Research, May 2013), 19, accessed July 20, 2015, <http://www.cepr.net/documents/no-vacation-update-2014-04.pdf>.
- <sup>18</sup> “Family and Medical Leave Act,” United States Department of Labor, accessed July 20, 2015, <http://www.dol.gov/whd/fmla/>.
- <sup>19</sup> “GDP (current US\$)” (PDF). World Development Indicators. World Bank. Retrieved 2 July 2015, <http://data-bank.worldbank.org/data/download/GDP.pdf>

## More than 600 Public Engagement Partners

More than 600 organizations have joined forces to use *The Raising of America* in screenings, forums, community dialogues and a host of grassroots initiatives to change the conversation about why some children thrive while others flounder.

Notable public engagement partners include:

- American Academy of Pediatrics
- American Public Health Association
- Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs
- Center for the Study of Social Policy
- Child Care Aware
- National Association of County and City Health Officials
- National Healthy Start Association
- Zero to Three

Visit the *Raising of America* [website](#) for the full partner list.

## Funders

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## Our Public Television Partners

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To learn more about our partners, Ctrl+Click on their logos.



### About Twin Cities Public Television (TPT)

The mission of TPT is to “enrich lives and strengthen our community through the power of media.” As one of the nation’s leading public media organizations, TPT uses television, interactive media and community engagement to advance education, culture and citizenship. Over its 50-plus-year history, TPT has been recognized for its innovation and creativity with numerous awards, including Peabody awards and national and regional Emmys.

Based in St. Paul, MN, TPT is one of the highest rated PBS affiliates in the nation, reaching over 1.3 million people each month through multiple broadcast and online channels. The organization’s particular areas of focus include: the educational readiness of children; serving the needs and unleashing the potential of America’s aging population; engaging a new generation in the power of public media; and being the preferred media partner for organizations that align with our mission to enrich lives and strengthen community. For more information, visit [TPT online](#). Follow [TPT on Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#).



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## About American Graduate

The public media initiative, **American Graduate: Let's Make It Happen**, is helping communities across America identify and implement solutions to address the high school dropout crisis. Made possible by the **Corporation for Public Broadcasting** (CPB), the multi-year campaign is designed to raise awareness and dialogue through national and local multiplatform programming. Targeting communities with highest dropout rates, the initiative also increases local engagement and action through collaborations and partnerships, and increases student engagement through teacher professional development and classroom curricula. Public radio and television stations—locally owned and operated—reach 99% of the country over the air, have built models for successful intervention in early learning, and have deep connections in the communities they serve. More than 600 partnerships have been formed locally through American Graduate and CPB is partnering with America's Promise Alliance and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Visit American Graduate on **Facebook**, **Twitter** or **AmericanGraduate.org**.

# Media Resources

## Spokespeople

**Renée Boynton-Jarrett, MD, ScD**, a Boston Medical Center pediatrician and researcher. She is founding director of Vital Village, a network of residents and agencies committed to maximizing child, family, and community wellbeing.

**Robert Dugger**, an economist and co-founder of ReadyNation, a business-oriented child advocacy group. He is a former partner of Tudor Investment Corporation, a multi-billion dollar hedge fund, and former policy director of the American Bankers Association.

**Jack Shonkoff, MD**, director of the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University and co-editor of *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Child Development*.

**Larry Adelman**, creator and executive producer of *The Raising of America*. He is co-director and head of production for California Newsreel, the country's oldest nonprofit documentary production and distribution center.

**Rachel Poulain, MPH**, director of public engagement and associate producer of *The Raising of America*.

**Christine Herbes-Sommers**, producer of "The Raising of America Signature Hour" and president of Vital Pictures.

## Media Contacts

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## Reporting Tips

- Stressors on parents can be “contagious”: they can get under the skin of their babies and young children, altering the wiring of their developing brains—with enduring consequences. See:
  - *The Wisconsin Study of Families and Work*, a 20-year longitudinal study of 500 mostly white, mostly middle-class families. <http://128.104.130.44/webdocs/researchers.htm>
  - *Core Concepts in the Science of Early Childhood Development (Brief)*, an examination of fundamental concepts in the science of early childhood development from the Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University. <http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/core-concepts-in-the-science-of-early-childhood-development/>
- The U.S. is the only wealthy nation without federal laws guaranteeing paid family leave. Without paid leave, 40% of new mothers return to work by the time their babies are three months old—some because they want to, most because they have to. See *Documenting the Need for a National Paid Family and Medical Leave Program: Evidence from the 2012 FMLA Survey*, a Center for Economic and Policy Research report. <http://www.cepr.net/documents/fmla-paid-leave-2014-06.pdf>
- Diapers are no trivial matter for low-income and poor families. Infants need up to 10 diapers a day, toddlers about six—at a cost of up to \$80 a month per child—but SNAP (food stamps) excludes diaper purchases, putting them in the same category as cigarettes and alcohol. See *Diaper Need and Its Impact on Child Health*, the first peer-reviewed study to quantify diaper need and explore psychosocial variables associated with diaper need in a large sample of urban, low-income families. <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3727676/pdf/peds.2013-0597.pdf>
- High-quality early care and preschool yield huge personal and social benefits—and pay for themselves many times over. See *4 Big Benefits of Investing in Early Childhood Development*. <http://heckmanequation.org/content/resource/4-big-benefits-investing-early-childhood-development>
- The assets and opportunity structures of neighborhoods matter, especially with respect to children’s long-term chances. See *The Effects of Exposure to Better Neighborhoods on Children: New Evidence from the Moving to Opportunity Experiment*. <http://economics.mit.edu/files/10552>

## Press Release 1: Overview

### ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation* Premieres on Public Television as Part of the Public Media Initiative *American Graduate*, Starting November 2015**

#### **How Our Nation Thrives Tomorrow Depends on How Our Youngest Children Fare Today**

Why has the wellbeing of America's children fallen to 26th place in the world? How can the growing squeeze on parents for time, money and resources literally alter their children's developing brains? What are the implications for young children, their families and the nation? And how might we do better?

These questions and more are explored in ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation***, a new, five-part documentary series probing how conditions faced by young children and their families form the foundation for success in school and later in life. The documentary concludes that support of early childhood development is America's smartest investment. The evidence confirms that starting early pays many dividends, not just for individuals but for the future prosperity, equity and wellbeing of the nation.

The opening "Signature Hour" of ***The Raising of America*** premieres on public television stations starting in November 2015. The public television special is supported by four additional companion episodes and a public engagement initiative involving more than 600 partner organizations. The full series is sparking a much-needed national conversation about how municipalities, states and the nation can better assure the conditions all children need for a strong start.

***The Raising of America*** is a California Newsreel production in association with Vital Pictures. The "Signature Hour" is distributed to public television by [American Public Television](#) (APT). [Twin Cities Public Television](#) (TPT) is the presenting station. The broadcast is part of the [American Graduate](#) public media initiative. DVDs are available from California Newsreel at [www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org).

Additional episodes track the nation's neglect of early childhood to a critical turning point four decades ago; assess the long-term payoffs from investment in the early years; illustrate the far-reaching impact of trauma on children; and spotlight discoveries from the exciting new field of epigenetics that demonstrate how early experiences become part of us, switching some genes on while turning others off. Video clips and a rich collection of other content are available at the [Raising of America website](#).

San Francisco-based California Newsreel is the nation's oldest nonprofit documentary production and distribution center dedicated to the dissemination of social interest films and videos. The current series has been informed by two groundbreaking multi-segment productions: *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*—winner of a 2009 duPont-Columbia Award and the 2009 Best Film/Radio/TV Program of the Year award from the National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Medicine—and the acclaimed three-part series *RACE—The Power of an Illusion*, which challenges the very idea of race as biology.

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###



#### **ABOUT TWIN CITIES PUBLIC TELEVISION (TPT), the presenting station**

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## Press Release 2: The Parent Squeeze

### ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation* Premieres on Public Television as Part of the Public Media Initiative *American Graduate*, Starting November 2015**

#### **When Parents Are Squeezed, Their Children Pay the Price**

“Our policies actually actively discourage parents from being able to take care of their children when they’re very young,” says economist and former hedge fund manager Robert Dugger in ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation***, the new documentary series premiering on public television in November and available on video from California Newsreel.

Dugger is alarmed because a more productive and prosperous American future depends on its ability to nurture the healthy development of the next generation. But recent scientific discoveries featured in the film found that societal stressors facing parents can literally get under the skin of their young children, with potential life-long consequences for their learning, mental and even physical health.

Most parents do everything they can to provide their young children the safe, secure and nurturing environments all children need for a strong start. But families don’t live inside a bubble. Parents are increasingly pressed by stagnant wages, the lack of paid parental and sick leave, the strain of finding affordable, high-quality childcare, high housing costs, unreliable work, long hours and commutes, and other sources of insecurity and worry.

That’s where public policies come into play. For example, every rich or middle-income nation guarantees new mothers paid leave, and 25 now provide paternity leave as well—with one glaring exception: the United States.

“We’ve made public problems into private problems, without resources. So you have to fix everything yourself,” says John A. Powell, director of the Haas Institute for a Fair and Inclusive Society at the University of California–Berkeley, observing the growing squeeze on parents for time, money and resources.

A 20-year-long set of studies featured in *The Raising of America* reveals that these parental stressors can be passed from parents to their young children. “We’re talking about processes here that are at a biological level,” says Marilyn Essex, co-director of the Wisconsin Study of Families and Work.

The Wisconsin studies, which followed 500 mostly white, mostly middle-class families for two decades, found that chronic stressors faced by parents could actually alter the architecture of the developing brains of their babies and young children with enduring consequences. Essex and her colleagues observed higher cortisol levels (an important stress hormone), changes in key brain circuits, and a more reactive ‘fight-or-flight’ stress response in the children of parents who reported lack of time, financial worries, and role overload when their children were young. Those biological changes in turn increased their children’s chances for developing emotional, behavioral, and learning problems as they grew up, including substance abuse, teen pregnancy and depression.

“Is that what we’ve decided as society, that this degree of tension, these complex tradeoffs, are the norm, to be expected, just a part of raising a child?” asks pediatrician and researcher Dr. Renée Boynton-Jarrett.

She argues that if we can create safe and reliable social environments, “the capacity of the brain and human spirit to thrive and develop is beyond what any of us could predict.”

In other words, some of the best parenting programs might have nothing to do with parenting at all. Improving conditions for parents and caregivers—living-wage jobs, affordable housing, paid parental and sick leave, safe and inclusive neighborhoods, high-quality childcare—can improve young children’s chances of growing into healthy, compassionate and caring adults.

“Most hard-working American families do everything they can for their children’s sake. Yet more and more are finding that no matter how hard they try, they just can’t provide for their children’s basic needs, putting our nation’s future in jeopardy,” said Dr. Joshua Sparrow, director of the Brazelton Touchpoints Center at Boston Children’s Hospital, after watching *The Raising of America*. “The film shines a bright light on these families’ everyday heroism, the hope and potential that live inside every child, and the practical steps we all can take to get our country back on the road to progress before it’s too late.”

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Additional episodes track the nation’s neglect of early childhood to a critical turning point four decades ago; assess the long-term payoffs from investment in the early years; illustrate the far-reaching impact of trauma on children; and spotlight discoveries from the exciting new field of epigenetics that demonstrate how early experiences become part of us, switching some genes on while turning others off. Video clips and a rich collection of other content are available at the [Raising of America website](#).

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A complete list of experts and advocates featured in ***The Raising of America*** and filmmaker bios can be found at [www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org).

###

## Press Release 3: America's Smartest Investment

### ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation* Premieres on Public Television as Part of the Public Media Initiative *American Graduate*, Starting November 2015**

#### **Noted Economists Explain Why Young Children Are America's Smartest Investment**

Nobel Prize-winning economist James Heckman and other leading economists express grave concerns about our investments in early childhood. Not because we're spending too much, but investing too little. They fear that the nation's future productivity and prosperity is endangered unless we ensure more of our children the opportunity for a strong start in life.

How investing in early child health and development pays for itself in many ways and many times over is explored in ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation***, a new, five-part documentary series. It probes how conditions faced by young children and their families form the foundation for later success—in school and in life. The opening "Signature Hour" of ***The Raising of America*** premieres on public television starting in November 2015.

Long term studies by Heckman, Arthur Rolnick, former senior vice president of the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis, and other economists reveal that children who receive high-quality early care and pre-school tend to do better in school, earn more in their jobs as adults, and pay more taxes, while costing less in social services, crime and prison costs. They've found similar benefits from home-visiting programs and other initiatives.

Not only do the children have better long-term outcomes, these investments pay for themselves many times over. "For each dollar invested you get back somewhere between 7 and 10 percent per annum over the lifetime of the child," explains Heckman in ***The Raising of America***. "In the U.S. stock market, an average portfolio would earn about 6 percent a year. So if you were...a government asking, 'Where should I put my money, in the stock market or in a young child?' You'd say in a young child."

National policy is not yet heeding their wisdom. Former hedge fund manager and economist Robert Dugger laments in the film, "Our policies actually actively discourage parents from being able to take care of their children when they're very young." Economists are clear about the equation: our system is paying for failure rather than investing for success.

Today's children are tomorrow's parents, neighbors, workers, citizens and leaders. If we make safe, stable and nurturing environments the birthright of every child, we will all gain from a healthier, safer, better educated, more prosperous and more equitable nation.

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Additional episodes track the nation's neglect of early childhood to a critical turning point four decades ago; assess the long-term payoffs from investment in the early years; illustrate the far-reaching impact of trauma on children; and spotlight discoveries from the exciting new field of epigenetics that demonstrate how early experiences become part of us, switching some genes on while turning others off. Video clips and a rich collection of other content are available at the [Raising of America website](#).

San Francisco-based California Newsreel is the nation's oldest nonprofit documentary production and distribution center dedicated to the dissemination of social interest films and videos. The current series has been informed by two groundbreaking multi-segment productions: *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*—winner of the 2009 duPont-Columbia Award, the 2009 Best Film/Radio/TV Program of the Year award from the National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Medicine—and the acclaimed three-part series *RACE—The Power of an Illusion*, which challenges the very idea of race as biology.

***The Raising of America*** received major funding from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and The California Endowment, with additional funding from Kaiser Permanente and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota Foundation. The companion website was supported in part by Grant Number CE002079 from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Public engagement partners include the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Child Care Aware, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Healthy Start Association, Zero to Three and hundreds of others.

The “Signature Hour” is distributed to public television by American Public Television (APT). Twin Cities Public Television (TPT) is the presenting station.

A complete list of experts and advocates featured in ***The Raising of America*** and filmmaker bios can be found at [www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org).

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## Press Release 4: Partner Initiatives

### ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation* Premieres on Public Television as Part of the Public Media Initiative *American Graduate*, Starting November 2015**

#### **More Than 600 Organizations Launch Initiatives to Change the Conversation About Young Children, Their Families and Our Nation's Future**

What do the State Library of California, churches in Kansas City, and the government of King County (Seattle) have in common?

They are among the hundreds of organizations using ***The Raising of America: Early Childhood and the Future of Our Nation***, a new, five-part documentary series probing how conditions faced by young children and their families form the foundation for success in school and later in life, to spark a much-needed dialogue about early childhood development.

The opening "Signature Hour" of ***The Raising of America*** premieres on public television stations starting in November 2015. Additional episodes track the nation's current neglect of early childhood to a critical turning point four decades ago; assess the long-term payoffs from investments in the early years; illustrate the far-reaching consequences of trauma on children; and spotlight discoveries from the exciting new field of epigenetics that demonstrate how early experiences become part of us, switching some genes on and turning others off, with enduring effects for learning, socio-emotional and even physical health.

More than 600 public engagement partners and other organizations around the country are convening community dialogues, policy forums, trainings and other events around the series, each with the goal of changing the conversation about what municipalities, states and the nation can do to make a strong start the birthright of every infant in the United States. Among the highlights:

- **The Raising of America Kansas City Coalition**, a network of religious congregations called Communities Creating Opportunity (CCO), local public health agencies and other organizations have been screening the series in the Greater Kansas City area to educate the public and advocate systemic changes that expand opportunity structures for young children and their families. The coalition's first win? Six weeks of paid parental leave at 100 percent pay for Kansas City municipal employees.
- **King County (Seattle)** Chief Executive Dow Constantine heralded a new initiative called "Best Starts for Kids" at a sneak preview screening of *The Raising of America*. Best Starts is on the November ballot and, if passed, will fund home visits, quality childcare, affordable housing and other upstream investments to help put children on a path to lifelong success. Screenings of *The Raising of America* are being held around the region to spark conversations about what can be done so more children realize their potential and contribute to the area's future prosperity.
- The **CDC Division of Violence Prevention, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs (AMCHP), National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) and the Healthy Heartlands Collaborative** are partnering, with support from the Doris Duke Charitable Foundation and the CDC Foundation, to distribute 800 DVDs to members to encourage local, state and national partnerships to identify and debate initiatives that can best nurture the next generation.
- **The State Library of California** and First 5 California sponsored a work-in-progress screening for 440 attendees at the First 5 annual forum in Sacramento. The State Library, in collaboration with the Brazelton Touchpoints Center, is rolling out an initiative using *The Raising of America* to

train children’s librarians across California to become a child development resource and advocate on behalf of the children and young families who use their libraries.

- The **Arthur M. Blank Family Foundation** in Atlanta hosted a work-in-progress screening for 350 civic leaders, whom the Foundation challenged to organize 100 community screenings across Georgia to change the conversation about early childhood. The Foundation quickly exceeded its goal and ordered 250 DVDs for organizations to convene community dialogs around the state.
- **The Early Childhood Colorado Partnership** convened more than 50 screenings, hosted two webinars, worked with Rocky Mountain PBS to arrange an early telecast of the “Are We Crazy About Our Kids?” episode, and created a Colorado-specific toolkit around *The Raising of America* to build support for high-quality early care and education.
- **Children’s Mercy Kansas City** has begun a campaign to screen and discuss *The Raising of America* with all 7,000 employees in its hospitals and clinics. The goal is to prepare each employee to act as a resource within the region on how social conditions impact early childhood. Children’s Mercy Kansas City wants to empower all staff and create a shared language that links individual child outcomes with larger social structures that shape choices and opportunities.

Other public engagement partners include the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, Association of Maternal and Child Health Programs, Center for the Study of Social Policy, Child Care Aware, National Association of County and City Health Officials, National Healthy Start Association, Zero to Three and hundreds of others. Their efforts are supported by a rich companion website at [www.raisingofamerica.org](http://www.raisingofamerica.org).

***The Raising of America*** is a California Newsreel production in association with Vital Pictures. San Francisco-based California Newsreel is the nation’s oldest nonprofit documentary production and distribution center dedicated to the dissemination of social interest films and videos. The current series has been informed by two groundbreaking multi-segment productions: *Unnatural Causes: Is Inequality Making Us Sick?*—winner of the 2009 duPont-Columbia Award, the 2009 Best Film/Radio/TV Program of the Year award from the National Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Medicine, and other honors—and the acclaimed three-part series *RACE—The Power of an Illusion*, which challenges the very idea of race as biology.

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