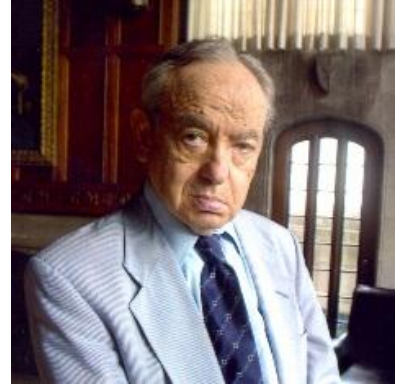


## Edward Zigler

- Born 03/1/1930
- Ph.D. from the University of Texas, Austin (1958);  
B.A. from the University of Missouri, Kansas City (1954)

### Major Employment:

- Missouri State Hospital - 1954-1955, Staff Psychologist
- University of Texas - 1956-1957, Child Guidance Clinic
- Yale University - 1959-2005, Sterling Professor Emeritus of Psychology
- U.S. Children's Bureau - 1970-1977, Chief



### Major Areas of Work:

- Psychopathology, Mental Retardation, Early Head Start Program, Intervention Programs for Economically Disadvantaged Children, Co-Founder of Head Start

### SRCD Affiliation:

- Governing Council Member (1971-1977); Social Policy Committee Member

## SRCD Oral History Interview

Ed Zigler  
Yale University

Interviewed by Elena Grigorenko  
August 28, 2003

Zigler: I grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, in a very different time in this country. It was during the Great Depression, and I'm sure my Depression years had a huge impact on me. I can still remember men selling apples on the streets and unable to support their families; it was a very bitter time in this country. And my parents were poor--both were immigrants. Neither of my parents had schooling and never mastered the English language very well.

Grigorenko: Where did you come from?

Zigler: My parents were both from Poland, from that district that kind of overlapped Russia back then. Actually my father came to this country several years before my mother and two sisters to earn enough money to bring them over. I was the first member of my family born in this country. I was born in 1930, just when the Depression was beginning. So my growing up years, until about the Second World War, were Depression years. As a result of my family's circumstances I started working when I was about seven or eight down at the city market, and it was a rough, tough existence. I grew up in an immigrant neighborhood and, since everybody else was poor, I didn't really know what my status was. While my parents were both uneducated, my grandfather on my mother's side was a highly educated, learned scholar in Europe. I don't know if it was the Jewish culture or exactly what, but there was a great love in our family for learning and education. Like most immigrant families, my parents worked very hard to see their children advance above their own status in life. My two sisters, who were born in Europe, and I certainly have done that.

My own education was also not of a very impressive type. I went to a poor elementary school in Kansas City and then went on to a high school that was essentially a vocational school because in those years there was this firm belief that if you were a child of an immigrant the best that you could do would be to learn a trade, master a trade, and make a decent living in this country. However, I knew early on I was, I guess, a gifted child. I skipped a lot of grades in grammar school and moved ahead. So I knew early on that I wasn't going to follow a trade. I made up my mind that you had to go to college if you wanted to be anything and that's exactly what I did. So I kind of ignored my trade, which I did work at for a while during the Second World War because men were in such short supply.

**Grigorenko: What was the trade?**

Zigler: Believe it or not, I was a cook. I was a cook. I worked at Harvey's restaurant, a chain that followed the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe railroads. I worked in one of them during the Second World War--well, I needed the money, for one thing, but there was also such a desperate need for manpower back then because all the men were at the war.

**Grigorenko: And how old were you then?**

Zigler: Well, I got through high school when I just was barely sixteen and then was done with my trade pursuing years. So this was probably during the Second World War, probably my junior and senior year. I used to work like a dog. I used to get up early in the morning and go down to the city market and work down there unloading freight cars, later graduated to become a salesman and then I would go to school and really, it was pretty tough. I can still remember falling asleep in some of my classes. I'm grateful that I had the intelligence just to keep up though.

Then from there I went to college--I was the first member of my family to go on to college. My younger sisters followed in my footsteps. But the only college I could possibly afford would be a local university; it's now part of the Missouri system. At that time it was the University of Kansas City, now it's the University of Missouri, Kansas City. My grades and accomplishments I had in my high school years captured a lot of attention because this high school that I went to was so poor in socioeconomic status they very rarely accomplished anything of intellectual merit. But as a sophomore in high school I won the city oratorical championship in Kansas City. I was also, in those days, a great debater - I'm still debating - and we won the debating championship. So it helped me get into college and helped me get a scholarship because I was born in the city. So I went to college.

Then about the time I was finishing my BA, the draft hit for the Korean War and I was drafted and my studies were interrupted. So I went off to Korea for a couple of years and fought in the Korean police action. It was about as bad as Vietnam, in my estimation. I was befuddled at the time, believing this was going to be another Second World War. Being Jewish and having most of my family slaughtered in the Holocaust, the Second World War, as Studs Terkel once described, was the last sust of war. I felt badly, when I was a kid, that I was just a little bit too young to participate in that. So when Korea came along, instead of trying to stay out of it like most of my friends did, I thought it was time for me to go to my war and off I went to Korea for a couple of years. Lived through it, got back home, and met my wife, Bernice. It so happens today is my forty-eighth anniversary.

**Grigorenko: Oh, what a special day.**

Zigler: And a terrible thing had befallen in the interim. You know, like most poor kids, I flirted with Marxism and all kinds of ideas and, of course, became all involved in Civil Rights like in the '40s and a variety of, I guess, left-wing activities as part of that desire. I never went further left than the Progressive Party of Henry Wallace and Glen Taylor in the late forties. I guess that made me a radical firebrand. But I was a normal, bright, minority kid who fought for these kinds of simple liberties and this turned out to be tragic when I came back from Korea because who was in full bloom at that time? Senator Joseph McCarthy with his communist hunt. One of my own professors was fired from the

university. I think he was probably a communist. But it was a very difficult time in this country and I had--I mean life is just full of these chances, just luck things.

So I didn't have any future career because my undergraduate major was not in psychology. It was in political philosophy and history and my plan was to go on to the Fletcher School in diplomacy at Tufts and try to become a diplomat working in the State Department. That was my great ambition. But with McCarthyism in full sway, you had to worry about anybody you've ever talked to, anything you've ever said. You know, it was just a horrendous time, time of blacklisting, and I had to re-compute at that point in time. I said, "There's no possible way I'm ever going to go to work for the federal government, they'll never have me because I'm too left wing." Ironically, I later went to the government and worked with President Nixon.

But what I did was a very systematic search for what to do with my life. I went back to college. I had the G.I. Bill so I could afford to pay for it. I took four courses and I decided whichever course interested me, that's what I would do with my life. I took courses in sociology, economics, biology, and psychology. Just by happenstance--I was doing very well in all these courses, I was a very good student, if I say so myself--my psychology professor, a man named Robert Neel, didn't have his PhD and was in the process of getting it from the University of Michigan. He asked me if I would like to be his research assistant in the psychology department. I had no idea what that meant but it turned out to mean I would sit at a hand calculator, calculating statistics for his dissertation.

So I got interested in psychology and as a result of that I took a few psychology courses then learned that you can't do anything in psychology with a BA or even an MA. You had to get a Ph.D. So then I applied to universities and I was accepted at all of them. Interestingly, I picked Texas over some better name universities. It was so cold in Korea that I swore to myself I would never go anyplace where it was cold again. So Ann Arbor was too cold and other places were too cold.

**Grigorenko: Texas sounded good.**

Zigler: Texas sounded just right. So I went to Austin, Texas, and actually established something of a record there--back then I was in clinical psychology, which wasn't wise on my part. And so I was in the clinical psychology program and managed to get my Ph.D. in two years.

**Grigorenko: So that's a record.**

Zigler: It was a record down there. But I had lost this time in Korea and I was in a hurry to get out, get through and do something. So that motivated me. Then I spent a year, after I completed Texas, on an internship at Worcester State Hospital which had a huge influence on my thinking. My primary mentor at the University of Texas was--one of them, and continues to be one of them--a child psychologist named Harold Stevenson. And it was there as a graduate student that I started debating Kurt Lewin. It was kind of gutsy for a graduate student to take on this great icon, but I disagreed with his concept of rigidity and the mentally retarded. I began this work with Harold Stevenson, who was my mentor at the University of Texas. But back then the dominant viewpoint in American psychology was behaviorism with Yale, of course, being its epicenter. I can still remember doing studies with Harold in which we would look at studies done with rats and then see if we could replicate the results with children. That was child psychology.

The internship at Worcester was a transforming experience for me because that one of the perks for the interns was a seminar held by Bernie Kaplan. Bernie Kaplan wrote with Heinz Werner. If I had to name three great developmentalists in my lifetime it would be Piaget, Vygotsky, and Werner. Well, Bernie Kaplan was an intellectual colleague, he'd written a couple of books with Werner and he knew developmental thought backwards and forwards. So there was this group of five of us, and I will never forget. Bernie is a brilliant man and I don't use that term very often. But I'm skeptical of everything. Skepticism is at my core. And I'd been trained in behaviorism and I knew all of Hull's Postulates and corollaries and all the debates between Bitterman, and Spence, and Tolman and others we studied. So

when I heard this alien language about human development and developmental thought it was totally alien to what I had learned and to what I understood. So I dug in my heels and very quickly the other four members of the seminar dropped out of the discussion because the seminar turned out to be a one-year-long debate between Bernie Kaplan and myself, with me defending American behaviorism. That, of course, was the evil incarnate for developmentalists. And I'm pleased to report that I was defeated badly and he convinced me that developmental thought was the truth - stages, all the things that we now understand as developmental thinking.

And then what happened, I changed direction instead of really pursuing a rigorous internship. The head of the psychology program at Worcester State Hospital was a man named Leslie Phillips. Leslie was doing some research that was kind of a developmental approach to adult psychology. I'd worked with adults at Worcester State Hospital and while at Texas I'd worked with children in a clinical setting. So Les, I guess, thought of me as a bright young guy with a real flare for research. I think I'm basically a researcher instead of a clinician. He asked if I would collaborate with him on this research he was doing. Little did I know that the research that he and I did back in '57 became the first studies ever in what is now the field of developmental psychopathology. It was essentially to take developmental thought and apply it to clinical instances and then to process also--have your findings help further developmental thought.

So it was this synergism between development and pathology that we were working on. And then I became a believer when I started doing this research and we were generating findings. Those were the days of hypothetical deductive models. I mean no self-respecting graduate student would ever do a study without clear hypotheses, clear predictions, and operational definitions of everything under the sun. It was a rigorous time, and when I started doing this work that was the proof positive that I needed that developmental thought was right because you were developing hypotheses out of mostly Werner's thought, a little Piaget, and testing them in very specific ways with good experimental formats. I remember our database was like a thousand or twelve-hundred patients and your records were histories and all that sort of thing. So when these studies began confirming our hypotheses I said, "This is the right way to go." I followed that line of work for about forty years. Just like the work I started as a graduate student in mental retardation, I've been following that for just two years shy of fifty years.

So one of the things that characterizes my work in whatever area I get into is to make it really programmatic and work on it for a long period of time. I've learned a lot more from the studies that have failed than from the studies that have succeeded because once a study fails then you've got to go back to your theoretical formulation, augment it, and change it. In that way with my formulations I kind of invented the developmental approach to mental retardation, which I'm working on to this day. I mean before I came along you could say, well, why do retarded individuals behave the way they do? The answer, well, because they're retarded. The idea being that everything is cognitive, that everything's explained by your intelligence or your intellectual level. So then I learned very quickly that simply was not true. I started writing papers like "The Retarded Child as a Whole Person," explaining that they're like other people, they have life experiences, certain things that befall them which then form not so much their cognitive system, although it does impact the cognitive system, I'm sure, but primarily their motivational structure, their personality, their character. So I started studying very specific constructs that I kept bumping into in doing these studies. Positive reaction tendency was the first, this great desire that these children have for social reinforcement.

Other people were testing retarded children and finding that they'll stay and play a task forever and attributed that to some cognitive structural problem. In Lewin and Kounin's terms that would be cognitive rigidity. So they just do a task over and over and over. And my formulation at the beginning was that's not it. You're testing children in an institution, more often than not in those days, and what is the institutional life? I mean sociologists like Goffman were writing books about the total institution and how it affected the behavior of individuals. So just like an individual with normal intellect, these people have experiences that lead them to behave in certain ways; what I realized could explain the long playing times. When does one of these children ever have an adult attend to them, to reinforce

them, all to themselves? So an attentive adult is a much more potent reinforcer for retarded children who have this deprivation of social reinforcement. Also, if you have a huge intellectual deficit you have to fail a great deal, and failure must have a huge impact on the child. We know that it does. So what does it do? It lowers your expectancy of success. It lowers your aspirations. "I can't succeed." It leads to a construct that I worked on many years, outer-directedness.

When confronted with a problem, and all life is for most of us a series of problems that the environment keeps resending and we have to solve each and every one as we go along every day, how do you do that? Well, most of us try to call upon our intellectual resources and our experience to figure this thing out and answer what's the right thing to do here. But what I discovered with retarded children is reluctance to use their own intellectual resources, even when they're adequate for the task at hand. Instead they become outer-directed, imitative. They look for cues not inside themselves as a guide to action, but rather for some direction from outside. That's why retarded children, and retarded adults, are very suggestible.

And so I was trying to pinpoint these traits. This work culminated in a book a few years ago called *Personality Development in Individuals with Mental Retardation*, where I talk about each and every one of these personality features. And, of course, that work once had a big impact on deinstitutionalization of the retarded population. My work was quoted in court cases because of what institutions do to children, although I have some qualms about how far it's gone. But it's given us a kind of different view that retarded people are people. In fact, one of my better pieces, I think, was in *Science*, oh, probably in the sixties where I brought up the problem, the continuing dilemma of cultural-familial retardation. That's the retarded group that I'm primarily interested in. There are two basic types, there's the organic and within the organic there's like a thousand different well-known ideologies, as you know. Then there's this other huge group that's approximately 50% that's still a mystery, it's a mystery to this day, that's the cultural-familial retarded.

So I wrote a piece in *Science* in which I asserted that that group was just as normal as the brilliant group at the other end of the normal distribution. It's a symmetrical curve with a low end and high end kind of dictated by the polygenic model in which you're an expert, and I spelled it out and insisted that these were essentially normal people. The familial retardation that I pointed out--you know, when we have a word like "short" it doesn't have to be a great stigma. I'm short. But we don't have a parallel term for somebody who's low in intelligence. So we called them idiots, morons, imbeciles, feebleminded, back in my day. Now these are all politically incorrect, of course. So I was arguing that this was the lower part of the normal distribution and, to that extent, they're perfectly normal human beings. They just represent this particular portion of the normal distribution. Then I argued there was a second curve, overlapping the first at the low end, that was a totally different curve, as far as I'm concerned, which is the organics. When you draw those curves you solve a great conundrum because if you go out and actually test whole populations you don't get a normal distribution of intelligence like you do with height. You have too many at this lower end and this two-curve approach explains why that excess would be down there. These are the organics.

So I completed my internship at Worcester State Hospital, and I was through down in Texas. It was time to get a job. My parents were still both alive in Missouri, so I was very desirous of moving back to the Midwest. I remember Bijou, who was then at Washington State, offered me a job and that was too far away so I took a job at the University of Missouri, which was the biggest school, at Columbia, Missouri. It made sense because at that point in time my focus in grad school was really clinical work, I'd written papers on all kinds of pathological issues as well as psychiatric diagnosis and prognosis. I also, by that time, had a lot of publications with children, with retarded children, and had had a job in clinical. And to the extent that mentally retarded children are themselves often included in clinical psychology, with their own chapter in any clinical psychology textbook, I was hired as a clinical psychologist and we moved out to Columbia. I liked Columbia and I could get into Kansas City to see my parents for a couple of hours. The rest of my family, my sisters, were up there, and my wife's family is in Kansas City, Kansas, so it was a very good location for us.

I was continuing my work in both areas when I got a call from Yale. And it turns out Yale, at that time, this was 1958, had no child development program. Had none. There was one worker there who, of course, went on to become very famous and a very good friend, Bill Kessen. But he was a learning theorist originally. But he became a first-rate developmentalist in his own right, primarily in the area of children's perception, as well as the history of child psychology. So they looked around the country, places they wouldn't have ever gone. Today if Yale were going to build they would find two very prominent professor types and bring them in and start a program. So my own reading of history is that they were just going to dip their big toe into child development and see if they wanted it or not. So they picked a couple of very young assistant professors. One just got his degree, Larry Kohlberg and the other was me, who had my degree for a few months, and we came here and started a child psychology program. Of course Larry Kohlberg is one of our country's great developmental thinkers, certainly his moral development work. And I too was a developmentalist. I was committed to the same cognitive developmental theoretical viewpoint as Larry, which I had learned in Worcester.

And so we came, two young men, to start this program and, very honestly, Larry hated Yale and Yale hated him. They couldn't understand--you know, the behaviorists here just couldn't understand what he was talking about. When you steal the medicine (a scenario in one of Larry's instruments), what's that got to do with psychology? You know, asking kids questions and using Piaget's clinical method was not what people did here. I think I was more acceptable to them because I was doing hardnosed experimental research, manipulating variables, had clear theoretical formulations. So did Larry, but mine was easier to comprehend, closer to the experimental stuff most people at Yale were doing. So Larry left within a year and went back to the University of Chicago where he got his degree and then, of course, he went on to Harvard and had a brilliant career. I stayed. And in those days nobody stayed. I mean you'd come to Yale for six years max and you kind of built a career and you got a job somewhere. And so I essentially became the head of the child psychology program here at Yale back in the late '50s and got us a big training grant and the accoutrements that you needed as a program. We began developing, I think, a first-rate program and I was very proud of it. I was very proud of the students we produced. I still am.

And then about sixty-five happenstance hit again and it probably started a new discipline that I'm probably the best known for. I think I'm one of the pioneers in a field called child development and social policy. Because up until then I was a very basic researcher and the only people that I could find at that time who were really taking an interest in how our knowledge impacted the real lives of children, outside of the laboratory, were the famous pediatrician who had become one of my mentors and best friends, Julie Richmond, who was the first director of Head Start and later Surgeon General in the Carter years and is still working very hard as an Emeritus Professor at Harvard. The other was Uri Bronfenbrenner who was, I think, just starting to develop his ecological formulations. So I get a call one day from a friend of mine, Robert Cooke, who was like the scientific guru of the Kennedy family, the Kennedy Foundation. Of course with their great interest in mental retardation, I got to know the Kennedys because of my prominence in the field. What Bob Cooke saw is that--and I guess I saw it too because I was seeing it in my studies--is, "Hey, these characteristics that retarded children have, they're not the only children who fail. I think any child with experiences like this will fail, will have this much failure in their lives. Who in our society is surrounded by constant failure, hopelessness? Nothing good is going to happen." That was kind of my life as a child in the Depression. Poor kids.

So I was beginning to do studies to show that the characteristics I was finding in retarded children could also be found in poor children. I was beginning to do studies where I had low socioeconomic status children, middle SES children, and retarded children as three different groups and almost invariably I found that low SES children looked much more like the retarded children. It's got nothing to do with their intelligence. Their cognitive level was equal--all three groups were matched on MR. They were, all three groups, equal developmentally. So all this had to do with these motivational and personality factors that I was emphasizing.

Unfortunately I've often been misheard. I'm being misheard by the Bush people today. Of course I'm in an argument with the Bush people today on this strictly cognitive focus. Never mind social and

emotional development of these children, if we just teach them those letters they'll read well. But we all know that curiosity and a thousand other variables go into a child's performance and this performance isn't an inexorable readout of his or her cognitive system. But the reason I've championed motivation was the field of retardation. As I've told you, everybody thought it was totally intelligence. Since retardation was essentially defined by intelligence then that's the cause of all the behavior. So somebody had to really push the other side of this. I'm a very strong believer in what I call the whole child approach. Cognitive development is not unimportant. It's critically important, but so are social and emotional development. So I see the whole child, I see the systems working synergistically and that's what I've championed.

In fact, I did a body of work that I wish more people did in that area. It's a fascinating area and not many people work in it - it's humor in children. And I remember taking an opposite position there. I'd read Freud and the various theories of humor; everybody was arguing the dynamics of the humor response. If you have problem aggression then you're going to laugh at aggressive jokes. So it was all personality and psychodynamics and what I found missing was cognition. I mean first of all you have to be able to have the intellectual wherewithal and the cognitive apparatus to get the joke. And that was left out and I brought that in. So that's a mistake.

I've been accused in the past that I have a motivational theory of mental retardation and I corrected that in a paper I wrote. I said, "Look, the basic problem with mental retardation is low intelligence. But this is the other part of the story is all." So it's been a debate really since I tend to be--I guess I'll always be that debater who wants a clear case one way or the other.

The other things I've noticed, people want simple solutions to complex human behavior, and behavior of a young child is extremely complex. I've learned that over fifty years now and the idea that it's going to be some simple little explanation--like the nature/nurture fight that you've been involved in--is wrong. You know, we all agree that there's this interaction. Why does it continue? Why do every twenty years we get a Bell Curve or a Jensen? Because I don't know if it's in the American ethos or our character or what--we love simple answers to complex problems. There's an old saying, for every complex problem there's a simple solution--and it is wrong.

**Grigorenko:** Yeah, I --

Zigler: Yeah. So, you know, I'm a believer that phonemics are important and phonemic instruction is important. So is the whole word, the whole word method. A good teacher does all this simultaneously and also makes it pleasant. I mean, I think the recent emphasis on reading with children has the impact it does because of where it takes place. We've got all kinds of evidence that if you read to your child that child will be a better reader later in life. But where do you read to your child? He's in your lap or she's in your lap, there's a proximity, there's a dynamic going on. This has great importance. Such a complex situation, even something as simple as reading to your child.

But anyway, people were beginning to spot that element in my work and Bob Cooke evidently did. In fact, he told me that in later years. Cooke was the chairman of a committee that was supposed to plan a preschool program for poor children, an effort that resulted in Head Start. And he asked me if I wanted to be on that committee. He had heard me speak two or three times at mental retardation events and he told me some years later that he wanted to name the program after my line of thinking. See, there was a big argument about what we would call this program. Remember Sergeant Shriver was essentially the head of the program because he was the head of the Office of Economic Opportunity. He had been a huge success with the Peace Corps so there was some talk about calling it the "Kiddy Core," but cooler heads prevailed and Bob Cooke, many years after the beginning of Head Start, said his idea was to call it "Project Success." "Project Success," to kind of play on the work I'd done and say how important it is for children to have successful experiences and on and on and on.

So '65 was the turning point, I guess, in my life. I was already thinking though in terms of pragmatics--you know, my philosophy was kind of embedded in pragmatism and a sense of duty, I guess, and I was

wondering even before then what is this business about. I could see at Yale what it was about and at most universities what it was about. What it was about was you did good, solid, experimental, respected works and good theorizing. Hopefully, along the way, you published in the best journals, you did a book or two, and then you became tenured and before long you were rich and successful. And that's what psychology kind of looked like to me because that was reality. In fact, when I started policy work was scorned. I mean this happened to Uri Bronfenbrenner, I don't know if it happened to Julie Richmond or not, because he never shared it with me. If you actually went to Washington, if you testified, if you wrote a piece about what you were doing in a popular outlet like *Parents Magazine*-- that was disapproved. You know, if we write a piece that appears in *Child Development*, 300 people are going to read it and that's a notch in your belt. If you write a piece for *Parents Magazine* and six million people read it and you impact lots of lives, in those days that was called prostituting yourself. And I can still remember distinctly in those years one of the great leaders of our field took me aside and told me that I would be a first-rate child psychologist if I would just give up this policy nonsense. But that's another book that I could write someday.

But I was convinced that knowledge was not its own end. I wrote a piece that I'm still kind of proud of called "Metatheoretical Issues in Developmental Psychology" in a very famous book at the time edited by Mel Marx in psychological theory. In there I said it doesn't make any difference if you're trying to raise children or start a social action program or go to the moon. You know, your knowledge base is important. And I just had this sense that our work isn't just to fill up journals and books. It is to impact the world out there and try to help children. These are our subjects; we get all kinds of money from the government, why don't we pick up some of these problems that they have? Because we know more about these children than anybody else. And so I was kind of advocating for that even, I think, before I got into Head Start, certainly in my metatheoretical issues paper, which was written in the early sixties.

And so they asked me to be on the steering committee for Head Start which was very honorific because this was like a Who's Who down there. There were only two other developmental psychiatrists on that group. It was a very multidisciplinary group. There were child psychologists, probably the best in the country at that time, Reginald Lourie, several good pediatricians like Bob Cooke who was in our pediatrics department here and then went on to become chairman at Johns Hopkins. There was a social worker there, a very good one, two or three early childhood educators, a nurse. So it was very broad. The child psychologists were Uri Bronfenbrenner, who was very similar to me in his approach to things, and then there was Mamie Clark, Kenneth Clark's wife, who was a clinical child psychologist who's no longer with us. Perry Crump, a very famous pediatrician. It was a very illustrious committee. I didn't know what I was doing there. I was young; when we started I was barely thirty-four-years old. I was by far the youngest member of the group and these were all luminaries. And I was honored to be with them. I studied Uri Bronfenbrenner in graduate school.

But I was--I'm noisy now, I was noisy then. So I became a force in this committee not by fame but by my nature. We agreed on most things. What we did was unprecedented, if I say so myself. This group of thirteen or fourteen people introduced two new facets to early intervention that had never been there before. First, there had been programs, early intervention programs like Susan Gray's and the Deutsch's in New York before Head Start, but these were essentially early childhood education programs. What we introduced was parent involvement. The idea--I think Uri was just beginning to develop his thinking at that time, you know, his ecological model. Well, what is the most important at that first level? The family. How can you ever have a functional child if you have a dysfunctional family? So get the parents involved in this program, work directly with parents. So today the conventional wisdom is that a good intervention program is to work with both the child and the parent. That wasn't there before Head Start. Second is you can't just have education. If a kid is sick or is mentally unhealthy he can't learn. You have to take care of his physical health, his mental health; you have to provide social services to the family and to the child when they're needed. So there was this comprehensive services approach that had never been there before. So those were the two facets that we had.



But there were two fights that I still remember; I won them both although I don't know if they were worth winning. One was over a qualm I had about Head Start from the very beginning, and I still do. I've had it all these years and I've spoken about it often. Nobody ever has to wonder what I think, I'll say it. I thought about modeling, modeling theory, and the morality of this country and questioned what are we doing setting up a program where you take all the poor kids in America and you put them in these centers that we're going to call Head Start Centers, and all the richer kids or more affluent kids go somewhere else? I mean why is it wrong to discriminate, to segregate children on the basis of race, but it's right to do it on SES? Well, the way it's justified in most people's minds is that you're giving them this service, and to qualify for this service they have to have this label. You know, economically disadvantaged, implying the income of the family. So I argued that we were making a mistake right away and nobody knew what to do about it. This was the War on Poverty that we were working on; this was President Johnson's War on Poverty. President Johnson was personally involved, his wife, Lady Byrd, was the first honorary chairperson of Head Start. And this was for poor kids. The poor wanted it and the middle class wasn't opposed to it; wanted it too for these poor kids. It was really a kind of idealistic streak that Americans have.

But I can see as a psychologist that segregation is not the optimal way to go. And I argued the case and nobody knew what to do with me or the issue. So we finally compromised, which was symbolic really, as far as I was concerned. It was probably done to placate me, that Head Start could have up to 10% of kids above the poverty line. To me, that was just sending the signal that we kind of knew that this wasn't ideal. Ten percent isn't enough. I don't think ninety to ten is a very good mix of anything. Furthermore, what happened over the years is that Head Start never served all the children who were eligible. It's very hard to give seats to the kids of somebody above the line when you've got many people below the line who apply who don't get in. So that over-income allowance hasn't been used a great deal.

The second argument is surprising; it surprises me to this day. And that was the evaluation component. I've always been very hard headed. One of the most impressive pieces to me was the piece written by my old colleague, Donald Campbell, called "An Experimenting Society," which says, "Look, try a program, don't fall in love with it, evaluate it." If it looks promising, worthwhile, expand it, go forward. If it's no good, cut your losses, try something else that may work. And that made such good sense to me so I started arguing, in the planning committee, that we should have an evaluation, even that very first summer. That very first summer. And I can still remember the response. It was, you know, "What's to evaluate? We're going to have these children, we're going to feed them good meals a couple of times a day, we're going to give them good experiences, we're going to take care of their health care. What's to evaluate? It's got to be good." And I said, "I believe it's good but you've got to have an evaluation to see, to validate that." And people hemmed and hawed and they argued back and forth. Meanwhile it's getting very close to the summer of '65 when the program's going to start.

Now, one thing in government is that if you have a measurement it's got to be approved by the Office of Management and Budget so you can use it. We had no measures. All we had was one noisy young man who was saying, "We have to do this." And the person who cut that Gordian knot was Julie Richmond. I'll never forget it, we were sitting in a meeting arguing as usual on this evaluation component and I was holding firm. By that time--he wasn't a member of the original planning committee but he'd been brought in to actually run the program--Julie Richmond was listening to all this. You know, democracies don't work like universities. It's hierarchies, whoever's in charge calls the shots. And it was his program and he called me out of the meeting and we're out in the hallway while time was running out. So he said, "Ed, you're right. We should have this and the only way we're going to have it is for you to do it," because there was no staff. Head Start had no staff. It was a part of the Community Action Program. It's hard to believe that you would put 560,000 kids into a program with essentially next to no staff. By that time, we did hire a research director, Ed Gordon, who's still with us. He was here at Yale, later he was the Dean at the teacher's college and he's still Emeritus Professor there. In fact, we even had a research committee that was established as a result of my clamoring. The research committee in the beginning was Uri Bronfenbrenner, Ed Gordon (who was Head Start's research director), and Ed Zigler. And we were all essentially basic researchers. Uri

wasn't very enthusiastic--I mean, he was probably more in my corner than not but he didn't see it as big an issue, I don't think, as I did. But who knows.

So I was faced with an impossible task. We just had weeks, just weeks, to do this. So I came back to Yale, got a half dozen of my graduate students and we holed up for like two weeks, making measures. Oh, they were so bad I'm embarrassed to tell you about them because we had no time to validate them or establish their reliability. I mean, it was not the way to do anything but we either had to do it that way or not at all. And, at that time, I kind of knew what direction I wanted to go in. I wanted to go in with a principle, that Head Start would have a research arm. That we're not going to move ahead without knowing what we're doing, whether something works or not, what the variations might be. [I saw a big role for research in Head Start then.] So I said at least if we get it off the ground we'll have the precedent. And we did. I will be the first to admit it was the most pathetic evaluation known to man.

Then I discovered something else that has impressed me to this day. Researchers do not work closely enough with program people. Because we had no staff, we ourselves would travel around the country to see what was going on, to help places with the evaluation. I mean, we worked night and day in that first summer and everybody complained about the research component. Their attitude was kind of, "Open your eyes. See, these children are happy. They're being fed, they're doing well. Look at them." And they couldn't understand why we were imposing all these forms I'd made up with my graduate students on them to fill out. What we were doing was pre and post without a comparison group. Great research. But anyway, we did get a research component established. I don't think we ever did anything with the data. It wasn't worth doing anything with, as far as I was concerned. But it did establish the principle so from that time on there's always been a research component in Head Start.

So Head Start's early years were very exciting. To my surprise I stayed involved with Head Start but I was kind of tangential. Most of the other members of the planning committee deserted it totally. So I kept being interested and doing some studies and working away. I was doing studies on Head Start locally to see if it was any good. And one day I got a call. What happened was President Johnson did not run for reelection. I knew President Johnson fairly well. In fact, he is a very positive man in my memory. I'm still in correspondence with his wife, Lady Byrd. But I got a call from the secretary's office at HEW, Health, Education and Welfare. What they had decided to do was to move Head Start. They didn't want this big Office of Economic Opportunity; that was Johnson's War on Poverty. When Nixon became president that war was pretty much over because no president wants to do what the last president did. And so I got a call, would I like to come to Washington and run a brand new agency called the Office of Child Development.

So I went down for interviews and talked with people and, very frankly, I was very ambivalent. I'd been used to going to Washington, being on committees or different advisory groups--you know, NIMH, NICHD and so forth and so on. But work in Washington? I mean, I was just a standard academic. I didn't understand that world; I didn't know anything about it. Why would I want to do it? I was doing fine. I liked Yale. My family was here and my wife made clear to me, since she has her own career and I had a young son, that they weren't going to Washington. She didn't want to take him out of school; they would have to stay here. That wasn't so bad in those days. Planes flew from the local airport, so we could come back and forth in an hour between Washington and New Haven. So I just spent weekends here where I kept my lab going all the time I was in Washington, continuing to do my research. So I debated about taking the job with a lot of people. When it was offered to me all of a sudden I'm in government and I'm getting a new agency called the Office of Child Development. On top of that, my charge, as best they could tell me--well, I knew I was Chief of the United States Children's Bureau--was that I was supposed to coordinate all the children's programs in the America. I was the president's point man for children's services in this country, trying to coordinate the uncoordinatable. And so I went to Washington. Those were exciting years. Here I was, running Head Start.

Zigler: I spent a very exciting two and a half years, I guess, in DC. I got the job, went down there, started this office, and in less than a week I was called to a meeting. I didn't even know what the OMB--Office of Management and Budget--was back then. They're essentially in the White House and have responsibility to see that all of the agencies conform to the President's agenda. The OMB people put a great big chart on the board when I was sitting there. I didn't even know who this guy was. They had been interviewing me for like a month before I took the job, maybe longer, and I never saw him. And he said, "Well, we've got this plan for Head Start. We're going to close one third of it out this year, one third next year, and one third the following year and it'll be over."

So I was essentially being given the task of ending Head Start. Nobody had ever mentioned to me ending Head Start. I would've never taken the job. But there's a hero in this story and I miss him greatly. He was my boss in Washington, Secretary of HEW, brilliant man, very, very astute individual, fastest learner I've ever seen - Elliot Richardson. So I was very angry and beside myself and didn't understand the situation at all. I went to Elliot Richardson's office and I said to him, "Mr. Secretary, you've hired the wrong person. Nobody mentioned closing down Head Start to me when they recruited me for this job and I will not do that job. I will resign today and further, as long as I'm here, if Head Start is cut by even one dollar I will quit." Because we needed the money to improve the quality of the program, I knew that before I went. I wish I would've talked to Elliot about this event later, after we became very close friends over the years, but I never did. He said, "I will go to the White House and see..." I now know the story but I want to put that in my next book. I want to do one final book on Head Start about all these years and the travails and the ups and downs it's had. It had a kind of "Perils of Pauline" existence. People love it, then they hate it, then they love it again. You can see this in the recent debate in the House about devolving it to the states or not.

But anyway, he took care of the situation. So he ran my interference for me at the White House. He was a liberal Republican, and he and I agreed on just about everything and so I got through that day. He said, "Just go back to your office and do your work," and he'd take care of it. And he did. But that was the worst day for Head Start. That's the closest I think it ever came to being wiped out. And that would've been in 1970.

So I went back and soon I encountered a brand new problem in America and I began working on it then, and that was child care. Child care was a disaster area in 1970; it's a disaster area for children and families today. I don't think one had to be particularly prescient because the demographics in our society have been changing dramatically. Families have been changing dramatically and the most dramatic change of all is the number of women in the out-of-home workforce. The second very largest demographic change that I would note would be the number of children being raised in single parent homes. It's about 25% of our kids. But in those single parent homes--that's a euphemism for women-headed homes. Eighty-five percent, roughly, or 90 percent of those homes are women-headed. And it's not accidental that if you look at the largest single group of poor people in this country, they're single mothers and their children.

So if you look at these demographics, the number of working mothers had been going up since the Second World War. You have to have child care for these children. How's a mother going to go to work without child care? But if this is a reality, we have to make sure this care is developmentally appropriate, that it's really conducive to growth. That's not what child care in America is. It's not even people's frame of reference for child care. There's a huge study recently done, and the metaphor that comes out of it is how people think about child care as a container. It's a container. Put the kid in there and keep the kid dry and safe all day. It's primarily a service to parents so they can go to work with peace of mind. A parent picks up the kid at night and then they start over the next day. Not to me, or to any child psychologist. This is an environment and it can be ranked from good to bad, and how good or bad it is will determine the growth and development of the child. The child's there every day for many hours.

So I saw this and I had one of the first conferences on child care in this country, it was at the Airlie House. I brought in like a thousand people trying to prepare this nation for child care. It was a good

conference. We made up kind of like little cookbooks with three different kinds of care, how to do it: infant/toddler care, preschool care, and school-aged care. I think those booklets are still available at the Administration on Children, Youth and Families, which is what OCD has now become.

Another thing was happening at the time. Well, a couple of things. One, there was the 1970 White House Conference on Children. We used to have a conference in this country every ten years. States would first have a state conference about what kids needed in their state, and then these state people would all go to Washington, the President would address them, congressmen would come over, it was a very big deal. It was a wonderful podium for children and families for like three days every ten years. Those have been held all the way back--it started in about 1910 or so and it happened every ten years. The last one ever held was 1970. In 1980 President Reagan, the conservative (I thought they were supposed to conserve), abolished it, said let the states do it. The states did it once, but they never did it again. One of my hobby horses to this day is to try to get the White House conference reinstated. I'll continue to work on that.

At the White House Conference on Children they made these state people do something they hadn't done before, to prioritize what they wanted to have happen. What's the greatest need that children and families have? What's the second greatest, and third? So that policy makers and congressmen could see what's the top of the agenda. And, believe it or not, in 1970 the very top priority was the need for affordable, good quality child care. Well, at the same time there were two very child-oriented congressmen who were working on a bill called the Comprehensive Child Development Act of 1971. On the House side--and I still see him periodically--was John Brademas. He went on to become president of NYU. And on the Senate side was Walter (Fritz) Mondale, who later ran for president and was defeated.

So they were working on this act which would've created a child care system for this country like the system that they have in Sweden and Denmark and other countries, where every neighborhood would have a child care center. We would introduce a fee so that people with more money paid more for the service, which makes good sense to me to this day, and poor people would get it for nothing. If we had that system today, wouldn't that be great for welfare reform because right now we don't know where we're putting these children? If they are in care that is terrible, and I fear many are, we're probably just raising the next generation of welfare recipients.

But it looked very promising and, at that time, President Nixon was supportive, probably with the pushing of Pat Moynihan. It's interesting that Nixon had some fairly liberal people in his administration. His domestic counselor was Daniel Patrick Moynihan. That means he's the chief counselor to the president on domestic issues. So this great expert was the architect of a welfare reform plan, vintage 1970 or so, called the Family Assistance Plan. Well, in that plan I was the person who was going to run the child care system because day care would fall under my office. So I started doing all kinds of work. I made up standards for child care and I did something else that nobody in government had done. I thought it's not enough to have good standards. We all know you can get any group of experts in a room and they'll figure out good standards for different aged children in a day. The question is how much does it cost? So I got those standards. My hope was that these would be the standards for all federal programs, not only child care for the family assistance plan. And they were kind of a revision of the earlier Federal Interagency Day Care Requirements. The earlier set weren't real standards, they were just rhetoric. We had to have something that was enforceable, that's what a standard is.

What I did with the standards was cost them out. Okay, if we provide this quality of care, how much would it cost? How much money do you have to put up? Because we only had so much money in the bill to pay for it and it depends upon the mix of children, it's a hard calculation. It costs way more to take care of a kid in infant/toddler care because you have to have a lower number of kids per adult, than it does to take care of the school-aged kids. So we figured all those different age groups to see if we could fit it into the budget, which we did. The President of the United States and the Secretary,

who was my immediate boss, wanted me to work on this legislation because we needed that system to provide day care in the Family Assistance Plan.

The other thing we won that I argued at the White House level is let us not think about welfare reform as a one-generation program where we get recipients and train them and get them to work. Let's think about it as a two-generation program. They have children. We don't want these children to wind up on welfare. Let's give them good enough experiences so they can avoid later poverty and welfare. And I sold it. Elliot Richardson liked it, and finally Pat Moynihan and the people at the White House accepted it.

So it was a two-generational program. I wish they would've done this in welfare reform this go around. So the country has regressed, as far as I'm concerned, with the new welfare reform plan because it pays no attention to the children at all.

And so I was legitimate--I couldn't have worked on the Child Development Act without the approval of the White House. I'm representing the President of the United States, so I can't take a position other than his. But he wanted it, Elliot Richardson wanted it, I wanted it. I saw the need for a child care system and I worked very closely with John and Fritz. It was written into their legislation that I would run that program, because, frankly, I knew more about child care and children. That was one of the amazing things to me. You know, you sit at Yale and you think, "Gee, all that money that they spend, all those people in Washington they have there. They must have the best knowledge about everything. They must have a magic computer somewhere that tells them everything they need to know." I got down there and it was just sad. Many of these people, they wouldn't know a child if they fell over one. Most of them thought Piaget was a watch. It just amazed me how the people who are making policy and running these million, tens of million, hundreds of millions of dollar programs don't know the first thing about the subject of what it is that the policy is about - children. That was very sobering for me.

I made it through my Washington years by having two people I brought from Yale, to whom I'm still indebted. One went on to become a luminary in his own right, Donald Cohen, whom I knew as a medical student at Yale, smart student, a child psychiatrist. The other was a student from Yale who I brought with me to be my special assistant--those two were my special assistants. And that was really the child knowledge base of the Office of Child Development. The Children's Bureau, in all fairness, had two or three older people who knew kids--but they were limited to foster care and adoptions, you know, these kinds of family issues. But it was just sad how little intelligence there was or knowledge about children in the government, which brings me to the next phase in my life.

But the '71 bill was a real heartbreaker, not for me but for this country. We had a grand plan on how we were going to treat kids in child care for the child care system, which has not gotten any better since 1970. Some people think it has but I would use as my evidence the recent NCJW report that followed how conditions in child care changed between 1970 and 2000. They've got a column for how things looked then, how things look now. We're now the same, the same, the same. So I worked very hard on the '71 bill and it was a very frustrating experience. I'm still a great admirer of John Brademas. Walter (Fritz) Mondale's staff got captured really by the left. I won't go into people's names. I may tell that story some day because it was very hurtful to me, but it was hurtful to me because it was so hurtful to children and what they could've had.

So at the beginning they had this good coalition of Republicans and Democrats and the bill passed Congress. Then it had to go to the President for his signature to become law. So we all cracked the champagne, congratulated each other, we passed Congress. But support was beginning to weaken already and it was defeated by the left and the right. The right had a close ally in the White House, Pat Buchanan, who was feeding the President all kinds of bias stuff about how we don't need this bill. The right wing of this country rose up, you know, this is the government raising children, this is socialism, families should raise children. I don't know why they don't complain about schools. Kids go off to schools every day. Is that the government raising children? Same thing in day care. But it became a very ideological issue for the right wing in this country. Back then there was the John Birch

Society and the Eagle Forum, today it would be the evangelical right, and they fought this bill. They sent in tens of thousands of letters to congressmen and to the White House. And so there was this right wing fight against it.

What happened on the left had to do with the size of the grant. They liked the Head Start model, where every community gets its own grant. We had planned [just give it to the states], let the state divide it up in their own communities and then we'd only have fifty grants to give. From the viewpoint of management, handling a system of that size made sense. But they wanted like thousands of smaller grants to communities of 5,000 people or however many, and we couldn't compromise. Even people like Senator Javits, who was a liberal Republican at that time from New York, said this is unmanageable. And I had to manage it and I said it was unmanageable.

And I'll tell a personal story. I began hearing that the President was going to veto this bill. Now, the Secretary was for the bill and I was for the bill. Elliot Richardson never wavered. But I kept hearing a veto was in the offing. The only way to head off the veto was to compromise on the number. So a wealthy, influential individual on the political scene hosted an emergency meeting [at her home in Baltimore] with some of the key players about what can we do to get this President to sign this bill. So I told the leader of this coalition, who wanted the grants to be smaller and smaller, "Look, I'm at the White House and I'm hearing that they're going to veto this bill. I strongly recommend compromise on the number, come down to something that at least might be manageable--you know, 50,000 or so." I'll never forget her words to me: "The President will never veto this bill in an upcoming election year, too popular, too many working women." And I remember saying in response, "I'm not the politician you are and never will be." "Well, that's true." "Well, there's nothing wrong with my hearing. I hear what's being said at the White House and they're going to veto this bill." And she refused to compromise so this bill was done in by the left in that way and by the right in their opposition on ideological grounds. And, of course, President Nixon did veto the bill. Then I was confronted with my worst period in Washington, which is a kind of crisis of conscience.

I was a presidential appointee. The President of the United States has a right to have people working for him who are loyal, but I could not and would not support his veto. First of all, I wasn't beholden to any job in Washington. I could always go back to Yale, I was a tenured professor. So my family wasn't going to starve. Some people don't have that luxury in Washington. I feel sorry for them. You know, if they're going to eat they're going to go along with the boss. Well, I didn't have to do that and I refused to do that. So I went to Elliot Richardson. You know, it's funny what you try to win at the end of one of these things because this was two to three years of my life we're talking about where I worked like a dog on this thing, day and night. And I went to the Secretary and told him I was going to have to leave because I could not support the veto and the President had a right to have somebody there who could support it, this was his decision. Elliot was fond of me, just as I admired him. He had a lot of confidence in me and didn't want me to leave. He said that he would go to the White House and work out something.

Funny how Washington works. So he went to the White House, and when he came back I went to his office. He said he's worked it out, I don't have to leave. So I said, "Well, what am I supposed to do?" He said, the deal that he worked out is (because I was giving speeches every other day), I could not attack the veto. I could not say I disagreed with it, that's a no-no. But I didn't have to say that I agreed with it. And so in Washington lingo that means when somebody asks you what you think about something, you waffle. So I could honestly say that this bill was unmanageable. Here's what I tried to win at the very end. I was in San Francisco. The Secretary heard directly from the President he was going to veto the bill. Elliot was for the bill too, and he called me in San Francisco. He was very nice and he said, "The President has decided to veto the bill, and I didn't want you to hear about it in the newspapers or on television. I wanted to call you because I know what this bill means to you." He was a very thoughtful man. And I immediately said to him, "Mr. Secretary, do you think they'd let me write the veto message?" And he said, "Well, I'd let you but I've got to go check on that at the White House." Had I written the veto message I would've talked about the great need that families had for child care and how when a better bill came along that somebody could manage, we'd look upon it

favorably. I would've said something positive about the need that parents had for child care. And about two hours later I remember Elliot calling me back and telling me the President--they knew my position at the White House--had chosen someone else to write the veto message.

The person is still with us, Pat Buchanan, and of course it was a right wing tirade against child care in general, which is now passé because since '70 until today the numbers of working mothers have just become immense. I mean it's far more than the slim majority are in the out-of-home work force. That wasn't true in '70. That's why they were able to get through finally, but it took two decades. They tried two or three times after that '71 bill, up to '75. They stopped trying for a while and finally got a bill, the Child Care and Development Block Grant in 1990, which is nowhere as good as that bill in '71, in terms of quality that kids would get. There are no standards in it whatsoever. I kept trying to get my standards used for a national program, and the furthest it ever got was they were sent to the Senate by President Carter and his domestic counselor, Eizenstat. But then Reagan got elected and that was the end of standards. We still have no standards in this country. Every state makes its own standards and, by and large, they're not very good. They vary dramatically around the country. A few states, about seventeen I would guess, of the fifty guarantee at least minimal care, which means the other thirty-three have got to guarantee either poor or very poor care. So this was probably the greatest single defeat of my life.

Oh, back to the reason that Elliot talked me into staying. He said, "Well look, he might have vetoed that bill but he's still going to get the Family Assistance Plan and you're still going to run the child care component--and you can call the quality there." But we had no system. We'd have to build our own system. He told me that I was the only one in the Nixon Administration who would really fight for quality care. People were talking about two kinds of care. One was custodial care, which is essential in the container metaphor I told you earlier. Just keep the kid dry and safe and warm and never mind anything about his development. The other was a kind of care that people associated with Head Start, and some people wanted that kind of care. You know, health services, this, that, the whole panoply of services. I remember one person arguing that position with me. He said, "You know, if somebody's got a family day care and the home isn't good enough, then you fix up the home." Well, nobody's got that kind of money to do that. It was unrealistic. I labeled that comprehensive care. So we've got two extremes. We've got custodial care and comprehensive care. I made up a new term: developmental care, in which you give the things that promote the kids development. You don't do everything you can think of for the child like all kinds of health services. There's no money for it. But you do have services that are conducive to growth and development. So I was trying to find that middle ground.

One of the arguments the Secretary used to talk me into staying was that I was the only one who was going to really fight for quality care under the Family Assistance Plan. The Labor Department wanted to run it, and they had their own plan with custodial care. They just didn't want anything to get in the way of the mother going to work. They just cared about the mother, whereas I cared about the child. So that helped keep me in Washington. Then it became apparent to me that Pat Moynihan had left the White House and there wasn't anybody pushing the President on the Family Assistance Plan. It was very complicated, and it didn't seem to be going anywhere. So I kind of figured out that it wasn't going to pass, and if it didn't pass, if the president was no longer interested in it, there was no reason for me to stay in Washington. I'd set this new agency on its path, we did a lot of things.

One thing I did while I was there that still goes on is I introduced into Head Start the national laboratory. We tried all kinds of things--you know, in the tradition of Don Campbell's experimenting society. We tried Health Start. It stank, so I ended it. We tried Home Start. It worked and we expanded it. It's now called Home-Based Services and it's still found in about 800 communities in America. I started the Child and Family Resource Program, and it was probably the wave of the future. That's what GHO said. Of course, when I left they closed them. It was to serve kids from birth to eight, not just these two years of preschool. I'm still championing the birth to eight period for intervention. And that was in place in the Child and Family Resource Program. You had all kinds of services, like a cafeteria of services. So it was probably the first, what we'd call today, the first family support program. So we did that.

Then I became a big advocate for teaching teenagers about children and parenting. You know, don't wait for people to have babies to learn about them. I mean, why don't we have courses in high school on being a parent and insist that students, while they're taking this course, work with younger children to get some sense of kids. So we started a good program I liked called Education for Parenthood. We did research with all these programs to see how they worked and to determine their value. These efforts have continued under the National Laboratory. The last major one is Early Head Start. And I was fortunate enough to work with Julie Richmond once again in that planning group. The committee planned Early Head Start from zero to three because we knew very early on that starting at three with poor kids was too late. We want to start prenatally; make sure that mother gets the health care; make sure the kid develops all the cortex that the child is capable of developing. So what you really want is a kind of program from conception.

What I argued in my writing is have a program from conception through eight. Interface that with a preschool program so it's as seamless as possible, and then follow this with a three-year or four-year program in elementary school and interface them. That's very interesting to me. This is an idea I've been selling for probably thirty years. It's in my *Head Start and Beyond* book, where Sally Styfco and I say this. And there's a brand new piece of legislation that's in the Senate as we speak, introduced by a Senator from Tennessee who was Secretary of Education, Lamar Alexander. And he's got a plan which will be a new innovation in Head Start called Centers of Excellence. He wants 200 Head Start centers in this country that follow that model, birth to eight. And I will be supporting it. I'm working right now in the Senate with both Democrats and Republicans on the Head Start reauthorization bill because I'm opposed to the President's plan to send Head Start to the states. We lost in the House by one vote. So the Senate, I think, will not recommend it going to the states so I'm very optimistic about what's going to happen in the Senate.

But when the Family Assistance Plan fell through I said it was time to go back to Yale. I'd had a very exciting time, won some, lost some, but I fought the good fight and I thought it was a good experience, I'd learned a lot. I learned about--you know, Uri Bronfenbrenner said it best. He said, "You'll never understand something until you try to change it." Well, Head Start is all about changing things and you learn a lot. I'm a better developmental psychologist as a result of my work in government and coming up with programs that impact lots of families. I began appreciating what day care meant to families. You see the ecological model of Uri up close.

It's not accidental that he was probably first in this kind of thinking but we're all convinced now. I don't know of anybody in my field who doesn't accept that viewpoint. It's not just the child, just his nature, his genetic make-up; it's not just the family. It goes all the way out to the broader environment. You know, employment today, when you start seeing increases in unemployment you're seeing worse lives for children. So it goes all the way up to his macro level. It's like a series of concentric circles with all of them forming and impinging and influencing the child's growth and development.

So I left Washington, returned to Yale, picked up my duties here, took over the Child Development program again and then, it was interesting, serendipitous, you know, these lucky points. One day I get a visit from the Bush Foundation started by Mr. and Mrs. Archibald Granville Bush in St. Paul. I hadn't even heard of them. They wanted me to help them develop motivational measures for something they were doing, because I was an expert on motivation and motivational development and how you measure these things. I made up many measures myself. So I said, "Look, there's been a tremendous amount of work done on measurement in this field and, yeah, you can make up a few more measures. But I don't see that you're going to have any huge impact. What I think you ought to do is try something that's never been tried before."

It was my experience in Washington that the knowledge that we had there was limited. We don't have anybody there who knows children--you know, it's not like scholars and developmentalists are going to run policy. Watching policy getting made is like watching sausage getting made, everybody influences



it. Pillow talk between a senator and his wife influences it. So the idea that we're going to use our wisdom and say what policy ought to be is conceited. First of all, developmentalists don't agree. Look at Ron Haskins, who's a conservative voice. Wade Horn is a conservative voice. So child psychologists take their knowledge and they see different ways to go with it depending on what they believe. But there ought to be psychologists there to at least have their say, at least give policy makers the knowledge about what is a child all about. Like some of this stuff they want to do with threes and fours, the testing that they're now talking about for four year olds in Head Start. Has anybody bothered to look at a four year old and what they're capable of? You would think not. So I had this dream, why don't we gather a cadre of students from a variety of disciplines--not just psychologists but pediatricians, lawyers, anybody--and teach them some basic child development. So I said to the Bush people, "Why don't you start a network of centers on child development and social policy where you're trying to train people who will work at the intersect of our knowledge base and policy construction, programs?" And they thought that was intriguing.

It was a small foundation and they usually just did their work in a certain area of the country, around Minnesota. So this would be a big departure for them. But again, fortune helped. There was a man on their board whom I knew somewhat, and he's one of the great advocates for children in this nation. He's a philanthropist and a very wealthy man, but also a learned man. He's learned a lot on his own. Irving Harris is his name. He happened to be on the board of this foundation. So they asked me to put together a group to come talk to them about this idea and make our case.

So I put together a team, Julie Richmond, who does everything, Shep White at Harvard, and Uri Bronfenbrenner, with me being kind of spokesperson for this idea. Very honestly, back then when we were doing this I thought that Harvard, between Julie and Shep, would develop one of these centers. I thought Uri would develop one at Cornell. That never happened. But the Foundation bought the idea and they went national. Four centers were established. The first one, we were in business I guess a year before everybody else, was here at Yale. And then one was done at the University of Michigan under Harold Stevenson, my own mentor. One was done at UCLA under Norma Feshbach and John Goodlad, and a fourth was at the University of North Carolina under another old friend who also was in the federal government before me, James Gallagher. The network used to meet to allow for cross fertilization between the four centers, collaborate. So it worked very well. I remember we used to try to hold meetings at SRCD and they wouldn't allow us to do it at the time of the SRCD meetings themselves. So we used to meet like a day or two days ahead of time before SRCD's meeting. And that worked very well. Now, of course, half the SRCD meeting is on policy and social action issues. So there's been a big change in SRCD and their program.

**Grigorenko: When did you join SRCD?**

Zigler: I've been in SRCD--I think the first time I went to a meeting was '61. I can still remember that meeting. We met in a single hotel on the campus at Penn State and there were no overlapping meetings. So what you would do is go to every single meeting and then you'd argue most of the night, with some drinking thrown in, of course. So they were great events. They're not like these huge, four-ring circuses that we have now because there's been such an explosion of workers in the field. But SRCD has changed as a result of this. I mean there's a new discipline in our field. It's called child development and social policy, which is our original name. There's an effort going on under the auspices of Sarah McLanahan at Princeton and Deborah Phillips at Georgetown and Larry Aber at Columbia to form a new consortium network. But now instead of four centers there are forty roughly. So this has become an important discipline, and more and more child psychologists are indeed working at the intersect of our knowledge base.

Now, I do not wish to be misheard. It used to be that people just thought basic research was at one extreme and applied was the other. I've always seen them as totally synergistic. I think you need people who never go close to policy to continue finding out the very basic knowledge that we're known for because that's the raw materials of what applied people have to have. I mean we're no better than what it is we know, and we're no better than we are in the state of our discipline. So how could

you invent that field of child development and social policy? As I said, the only couple of people who really informed my own thinking were Uri Bronfenbrenner and Julie Richmond.

So I take pride in that. I take pride. I mean, these centers trained hundreds of people. Now they're all over the country. A lot of these programs I'm talking about are headed by Bush graduates, not only from Yale but from the other centers as well. I mean workers like Ross Thompson, who is a graduate of the Michigan center. Ron Haskins, he's a huge power in Washington. He was the associate director under Jim Gallagher in North Carolina. So these four centers have now grown to be about forty and some of those early players are still around. Jim Gallagher's still working. Uri, I talked to him on the phone a week or so ago, he's writing a new book. Harold Stevenson, of course he has some health problems. [Both have since passed on.]

Of course, I've done a lot of other things. Once you're in Washington you become visible. During the Vietnamese baby lift--President Ford was the President at that time--here again, they didn't know how to help these babies--here are all these kids coming to this country. How do you resettle them? What do you do? How do you do it? And the President, his administration, asked me to chair the committee for the resettlement of those children we brought to this country at the end of the Vietnamese war. So I played that role. Wasn't all together successful but we did what we were commissioned to do. There is this kind of split in American child psychology. I asked Julie Richmond to serve on the committee. I knew these kids were going to have health problems and for that we would need planning from a good pediatrician. He, of course, said yes immediately. And I asked another very prominent child psychologist in this country to serve on this committee. He said we already know exactly what should be done. "We should get the government to give us a big kitty of money and then do a longitudinal study on these kids and follow them." And I said, "But you don't understand. They're asking our help in seeing that these children are resettled as optimally as we can. We have to use the knowledge we've got to help the government do this." But he couldn't see it, and so we didn't invite him to be on the committee.

The same thing happened at SRCD, which illustrates how things have changed. I was on the governing council of SRCD at that time and Bob Sears, I think, was serving a second term as president. He was another known figure in American child psychology at that time, and he's still an icon in our history. So I was on the governing council--this was before I'd been asked to head the resettlement committee--and I wanted SRCD to do it. My proposal to the council, and all the younger members thought it made good sense, was, "A lot of these kids have been in orphanages, they've been brutalized, they've been living under awful war conditions. You know they're going to have a lot of health problems, psychological problems. We in SRCD have the best core of information." I was an expert because I'd been studying social deprivation. That's what these kids experienced. But there's a lot of other great workers who have studied deprivation experimentally, Jack Gewirtz and on and on and on. I could think of 25 members who had very good knowledge about how to help these children--telling the parents who adopted them what to expect, how to help the kids get through this transition. So I suggested that we should write the President and offer the services of SRCD to be helpful in resettling these babies.

I think I had the votes on council, but in those days some people were more equal than others. So I can still remember Bob Sears, who years later was still a friend of mine until his death. He said he'd have to think about it. He'd have to think about it. And he came back the next day or in a couple of days and said he'd been giving it a lot of thought. What he decided to do was write a letter to the President offering to him his own personal services but he would not commit SRCD. SRCD is a scientific organization, so his view was researchers should stay in their laboratory, do their work. If somebody used it, fine. Don't offer, don't extend, just stick with solid basic research and let others apply the findings in the real world.

So that was the end of that. Just by happenstance, because I had just been in Washington a few years before in the Nixon Administration, it wasn't a big reach for the Ford Administration to think of me. We came up with a plan about the services we thought these children would need and how we should provide them. Because a lot of the parents who adopted these children didn't really know what they were getting into, we could've told them a lot. It wasn't the happiest episode of my life because that

plan we developed for those children didn't go very far. People were sick of the Vietnamese war, and nobody really paid much attention to it. It was very hard to get anything done for them. I just did a TV program not long ago on the 25th anniversary of the baby lift. Some of these children went back home to Vietnam.

But so I kept buzzing along. My primary responsibility was here at Yale. I stayed very close to Head Start. I was involved in most reauthorizations, continue then and now to testify before Congressional committees, and help where I can. But I'm getting a little long in the tooth. I continue to feel that probably my greatest contribution is the absolutely wonderful students I mentored. Many of them are already out in the world. Deborah Stipek, the Dean of the School of Education at Stanford, Deborah Phillips who's the Chair of Psychology at Georgetown, Larry Aber, head of National Center for Children in Poverty, and on and on and on. So I'm very proud of my students.

My own plan is just to keep working. I've got two or three more books I'd like to write. I've just sent my publisher my book on the Head Start Debates. I've been very active in testifying and working on this brain development issue that's very hot because I was on the Turning Points panel for the Carnegie Corporation that really put the spotlight on the topic.

So I remain very active. I still do a little bit of research on mental retardation. Psychopathology, not as much anymore. I'm limiting myself to very few studies with students and a book or two. I'm now an Emeritus Professor after being at Yale now 54 years. That kind of brings us up to date.

**Grigorenko: And it's been wonderful. They do have four questions that are really specific to SRCD? So they would like us to talk for a few minutes about your earliest encounters with the society, if you remember them.**

Zigler: Well, the earliest that I remember I've already told you about. When I joined the society I went to my first meeting and I went religiously every two years thereafter. I served on the governing council. I ran for president once but was defeated by Francis Horowitz, which was a wise decision on the part of the membership.

I did something that I'm proud of for the society. We had a fine developmental psychologist in this country, Joseph Stone. This was in the days when I was on the council. Joe had this wonderful collection of films that he'd been filming for years and years, of children over the decades. It's a great intellectual resource because scholars use these films to see children at different times in history, to see what about childhood has changed and what has stayed constant. He came to the SRCD and asked for our support in building an archive for these films. And we did the usual thing. Yeah, we're all for it, Joe. We give you our blessing. Of course that didn't get him anything. Joe was a fine, gentle person, but in this world you have to be a little tough. You know, hustling is hustling and getting money is hard. I hate it myself but if you're going to be in this profession--it comes with the turf. So he needed money to build an archive.

So I'm back here at Yale after this meeting and he calls me. I'd heard that he was very ill; he was in the hospital dying of cancer. Joe called me because he noticed me at that meeting. We were old friends, and he had married a very close friend of mine as his second wife, Jeannette Galambos. He said, "Ed, I'm not well, but I will get on a train and come up to see you to see if you can't help me with." This was his life, with this archive. Well I knew how ill he was, I'd heard from Jeannette. And I said, "Joe, you're not feeling well. There's no need for you to come up here. I promise you that I will get you your archive." It actually worked in Yale's behalf because Yale had all the Gesell movies that we didn't know what to do with that were deteriorating. So we needed a film archive, for our own purposes. So I told him that I would do it. The next day or two, he died. So I'm stuck with this promise.

So I went back to SRCD and I said, "Look, make me a committee of one so at least I can speak that I'm an SRCD committee. Then I'll go out and hustle this money and get us an archive." And I did that. I remember we were entertaining different places to build it, and people in Akron told me, "If you put

this at Harvard or Yale, it's going to be a small, little thing among bigger things. For us, it'll be very important. We'll treat it with the importance that it merits." So that's where the archive is. And so I kept my promise and we now have a film archive.

SRCD is a funny organization. There's usually a kind of power structure, essentially twenty or so people dictate policy. I remember at one of the business meetings students dared to suggest a change in Child Development. Child Development is the bible of SRCD. These young Turks were saying we should have a certain number of pages given over to policy and social action issues. I can still remember the power structure was in a tizzy because I was a part of it. But I was, as usual, opposite. I agree with the young Turks. That was my agenda. I didn't put them up to it though. And the leadership didn't know what to do. They wanted it to look like they would be responsive, but they didn't want to give up a single page of Child Development. So what they gave them was the Child Development and Social Policy Committee, which exists to this day. It's very interesting that some years later Marc Bornstein, as one of his conditions of being journal editor, was that a certain number of pages be given to policy issues, and this continues. In fact, I've just done a study; it's going to be in my Festschrift volume with Deborah Phillips. We've gone through Child Development over decades and watched the increase in the number of these socially relevant papers. And it's been straight up and linear. It's going to go up some more because there's a lot of opportunity.

If nothing else, the Bush Center--which was recently renamed the Edward Zigler Center--and other centers like it prepare people to take jobs in government, in research foundations, and on and on and on. So it just adds another arrow to young people's career prospects when they're in the job market. There are not that many tenured university jobs, and some people don't want to teach. Some people prefer to do policy relevant work. And that's fine, because it's getting harder and harder to try and do both because both fields are growing. In fact, I can still remember warning my students in the early days. You know, you're a model for your students. I said, "Look, everybody wants to do what I did. If you're going to be in a university, you're going to have to work twice as hard as everybody else because in a lot of places you're not going to make tenure or be promoted with policy work."

Zigler: "You're going to have to do good, basic work." And some of that comes from something I learned from Uri about being an advocate. I never considered myself an advocate for children. I take knowledge and move it from here to there. Many social and nonprofit organizations are much better advocates than we'll ever be. Uri made this point clearly. He said, "Look, what do you have to contribute? What you have to contribute is your knowledge. You have to know you have to have a field of study; you have to understand it; you have to be an expert at it. That's the only way you can make a substantive contribution."

So I was warning students that you really had to be a good scientist. I mean why was I acceptable to Yale when I started all this stuff? Because everybody knows that I'm as hard-nosed and rigorous a scientist as anybody else. I've done all this work, more than I like to admit. But most of it has been hard-nosed experimental, manipulating the variables, testing theories. I don't think that's so necessary anymore. I think it's now possible for a student to be, for example, a real expert in welfare reform and be valuable to the department. Young people want to know this stuff; they're interested in what's happening in the world around them, it's relevant, it's important. But I'm not certain of that. I'm not certain of that. I still think there are pockets of resistance where people like me are not considered real behavioral scientists but do-gooders or something. But certainly the battle is a lot closer to being won in 2003 than it was when I started back in the early '70s.

So I've had close contact with SRCD. It's been a very important factor in my career. I've known all the executive directors. For example, I'm working right now with John Hagen, the current executive director. For several years he and Faith Lamb-Parker at Columbia have been running a conference every two years and the idea behind it goes all the way to what I learned that first summer at Head Start. The conference is for practitioners and researchers to come together, learn from each other what's valuable, and really work out partnerships. SRCD has spent many years now playing a central

role in that. I've been on the planning committee. I think our next one is coming up in June. So my ties to SRCD have been close for over forty years.

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**Those who inspired and were influenced by Edward Zigler:**

**Mentors**

Robert Neel  
Harold Stevenson  
Leslie Phillips  
Julius Richmond  
Uri Bronfenbrenner

**Colleagues**

Kurt Lewin  
Bernie Kaplan  
Heinz Werner  
William Kessen  
Lawrence Kohlberg  
Robert Cooke  
Donald Campbell  
James Gallagher  
Robert Sears  
Joseph Stone