

In general the health problems of children in disadvantaged families are slightly higher than the children from more advantaged families, but the big difference is that in the more advantaged families those health problems are under treatment and under care, whereas in the disadvantaged families they are not.

There are certain kinds of things, and these tend to be a little bit regional, in which Headstart children clearly have substantially greater problems, particularly in the anemic categories and in certain types of parasitic infections.

Nutritional deficiencies which do appear in Headstart children are pretty clearly being demonstrated as directly related to their rate of development, and I think this is something that is merging as a stronger and stronger factor within the Headstart programs.

Now I have made rather strong statements here about what Headstart research shows. Having made those statements let me hasten to add that the technology of evaluation is in my judgment not yet adequate to give us sound and clear-cut answers.

Many of the research findings are contradictory to one another, although the points which I have made above are representative of the general research findings. Part of the contradiction comes from the real difficulty of using any single form of evaluation to determine the work of a program which is nationwide in application and extremely heterogeneous in approach.

At the simplest level there are considerable technological difficulties in determining whether a particular kind of program is having a particular kind of result with a particular child. Yet this is exactly what we need to determine if we are to have any truly useful evaluation of the Headstart program.

We have had some real growing pains in the evaluation and research effort and I will not clutter the record with all the problems that we have had. Let me simply say that we have now evolved to the point where we have funded 13 university-based Research and Evaluation Centers. We see these as long run investments producing a constant flow of information and data which will be useful to us grantees and which will add a stability to our research program that it has lacked in the past.

First reports of these evaluation and research centers should become available this fall and thereafter there will be a rather steady flow of material coming out of them.

One of the real problems in the research program is the question of development and utilization of appropriate instrumentation. The fact is that when Headstart began there was very little in the way of testing materials that had been specifically designed for disadvantaged children of this age group so we pretty much had to develop it as we went along. I am sure you are aware, then it takes a considerable amount of time to validate, standardize and otherwise assess test instruments to find out if they really show you what you think they show you. We are going through that process and in a period of time we should be in pretty good shape on that.

We also use the Bureau of the Census extensively to gather information for us. Here again another government agency has been extremely helpful in going out of their way to provide the kind of data that we need.